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Dr. *HUNTINGFORD*'s

DISCOURSES.

VOL. II.

DISCOURSES

ON

DIFFERENT SUBJECTS.

BY

GEORGE ISAAC HUNTINGFORD, D.D.

Warden of St. Mary's College, Winchester.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

LONDON:

Printed for T. Cadell jun. and W. Davies (Succeſſors to Mr. Cadell) in the Strand.

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TO

THE REVEREND

MR. KING,

OF WORTHIN IN SHROPSHIRE.

DEAR SIR,

NEXT to the recollection of thoſe with whom we are united by the ties and affections of conſanguinity, the retroſpect of time paſt hath nothing in it ſo pleaſant as the remembrance of thoſe who were the friends of our youth, and who have grown up with us in habits of intimacy through a long period of ſucceſſive years. To this circum-

ſtance let it be imputed, that to You in particular are preſented ſome Diſcourſes, the principles of which were imbibed at that early age, when we were companions in the purſuit of polite and religious learning.

In the interval which has elapſed between thoſe and the preſent days, queſtions of the moſt important concern have been much agitated. From the extreme violence with which the Chriſtian Religion has been attacked, hath however enſued this ſalutary conſequence; that many perſons who before had not ſufficiently inveſtigated either the grounds on which it reſts, or the doctrines which it inculcates, have been led to examine both with the moſt

moſt ſerious and diſpaſſionate attention.

In making their enquiry into the grounds on which it reſts, they have not indeed demanded mathematical proof; becauſe in a matter to which demonſtration of that kind is not applicable, to expect it were contrary to ſound philoſophy. But they have minutely ſearched the different and concurrent teſtimonies of hiſtorical facts; have thoroughly conſidered the force of hiſtorical arguments; and thence they cannot but believe that Chriſtianity is founded on the ſtrongeſt evidence appropriated to ſuch a ſubject, the evidence of Moral Certainty. And as no ſyſtem of religion with which we are acquainted appears ſo clearly

expreſſive of what reaſon would conceive to be the Divine Will; as none is either ſo widely comprehenſive in its precepts; or ſo conducive to the practice of virtue by means of its ſanctions; or ſo ſuited to the nature of Man, with reſpect both to his preſent condition and hopes of future exiſtence, as the Goſpel ſyſtem; ſo in adherence to its doctrines as the rule of our faith concerning God, as the guide of our actions on all occaſions, as the ſource of our moſt ſubſtantial comforts in all ſituations, we continue immutable.

Our Civil Polity hath not been treated with greater moderation than our Religion. Both have equally been vilified, and the event in both caſes

caſes hath been ſimilar. That which before was but partial prejudice, hath upon conviction of its excellence been converted into the firmeſt attachment to the ESSENTIAL FORM of our Government. The conviction hath ariſen from due conſideration of its diſtinguiſhing properties, and from attention to the happy effects which it actually produces.

Supported on this baſis of theory and experience, thoſe who are enabled to eſtimate the bleſſings enjoyed by perſons of all denominations in this Country, have with earneſt ſolicitude endeavoured to ſecure their ſtability and permanency. To this end they have inculcated

truths which natural and revealed religion alike proclaim; that, by the will of God, legible and viſible in the qualities and propenſities of human kind, Man is deſigned to live under *ſome* form of government: that no form of government can be effectual to good purpoſe; unleſs there be in the people, whom it is to protect, a temperate diſpoſition to order and union: that the cultivating of ſuch a diſpoſition is a duty of moral obligation, reſulting from the relation in which we all ſtand, to God as our Maker and Governor, and to men as our fellow-creatures. Theſe are maxims which, as they clearly tend to the conſervation of individuals and

to the improvement of ſociety, no perſon of ſober mind and right judgment can well diſapprove; and which therefore we can think it neither ſafe to relinquiſh, nor reaſonable to change.

Thus perſuaded, through that term of years which by Divine Providence may ſtill be added to our lives, may we remain equally invariable in our Chriſtian and Conſtitutional principles! Nor in theſe only be our conſtancy ſhewn! But may we alſo ever retain and cheriſh that mutual eſteem under a full ſenſe of which this Work comes to you; preſuming on your known candour to hope, that as it is thus dedicated to friendſhip, and

wiſhes to recommend the moral and religious truths of the Goſpel, it will, notwithſtanding its imperfections, be received and viewed by you with great indulgence.

I am,

DEAR SIR,

Your affectionate,

and ſincere Friend,

GEORGE ISAAC HUNTINGFORD.

WINCHESTER COLLEGE,
June 15, 1797.

PREFACE.

IN this, as in the preceding Volume of Diſcourſes, are interſperſed references to the Works of eſtimable and reſpectable Writers. And here, as before, they are introduced, ſometimes to point out the paſſages, which were immediately preſent to the Author's thoughts as his ſubject was proceeding; and ſometimes to confirm and illuſtrate ſentiments that reſulted not from any recollection of former reading.

In quoting appoſite paſſages from ancient Claſſics, has been followed the practice of eminent Divines, who, in the years of their moſt mature judgment, have thought their learning and knowledge could not be better applied, than to the purpoſe of elucidating and adorning doctrines moſt highly important and intereſting to mankind.

As

As theſe, and all other Extracts tranſcribed throughout the Two Volumes, are detached from the Text, no Reader, it is preſumed, can cenſure them for impeding his progreſs; but many, it is hoped, will think them uſeful additions: for illuſtrations of this nature tend either to revive in the memory paſſages from writings already known and admired; or to recommend books not hitherto peruſed, though deſerving the attention of ſtudious and reflecting minds.

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ERRATA.

Page 50. line 13. *for* ſhould men honour *read* men ſhould honour.
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DISCOURSE I.

The DUTY of seeking after GOD; the Motives to it; and the Effects of so doing.

Ps. lxix. 33. 32 Bible Thes. Your heart shall live, that seek God

Seek ye after God, and your Soul shall live!

SO visible are the works, and so adorable are the attributes of God, that when the mind of man, through divine assistance, is once brought to serious reflection, it is led by the conclusions of its own reasonings, and animated by the impulse of its own devout feelings, to acknowledge and worship that infinitely good and great

DISC. I.

DISC. I. Being, who is the author and giver of every bleſſing enjoyed by man! But habits of ſerious reflection are not thoſe which commonly prevail in the world. From the moment in which man firſt offended his Maker, to the preſent day, the hiſtory of human nature has ſhewn us more addicted to paſſion than obedient to reaſon, more eager in the purſuit of ſome fantaſtic amuſement than intent on diſquiſitions of truth, more prompt to gratify corrupt inclination than diſpoſed to adopt the ſober reſtraints of religion. The enormities of the vicious and the follies of the imprudent have continued to exhibit a demonſtration, clear as it is lamentable, that on the greater part of mankind a ſenſe of God and of the duty owing to him does not operate ſo effectually, as to produce pious affections, ſanctified thoughts, and virtuous practices. So far indeed as religious ceremonies are concerned, the external obſervance of *them* has in no age been generally neglected: rites and forms may be duly diſcharged without much difficulty: but this is not all which is required

of

of one to whom underſtanding is imparted, DISC. I.
for whom a ſtate of immortality is prepared,
and whoſe happineſs will conſiſt in ſuch
moral perfection as may liken him, though
in degrees of unſpeakable diſparity, to God,
who is all in all perfect! Man, who is thus
gifted with powers of reflection, thus deſtin-
ed for future exiſtence, thus conſtituted to
find his chief felicity in the exerciſe of
rectitude, purity, and holineſs; man in theſe
circumſtances is called upon by the God
that made him, to do much more than merely
offer ſacrifice from his hands and lips: the
heart is to be devoted to God! In every
appearance under which we view the ſeveral
works of creation, the form, fitneſs, and
utility of them we muſt aſcribe to divine
wiſdom: in all the events which are inci-
dent to life, either with grateful thankſgiving
in proſperity, or with ſubmiſſive reſignation
in adverſity, we muſt confeſs the interpoſi-
tion of divine providence: in public inter-
courſe, in private retirement, in every
thought, word, and deed, God is to be the
ultimate, if not immediate, object directing

DISC. I. our conduct. Habitual conviction of his omniprefence is to be ſettled continually more deep and ſtrong on our very ſouls: in all our counſels, all our purpoſes, all our undertakings, all our ways, we muſt ſeek Him; ſeek Him, not with formality, not with coldneſs, not with indifference; but vitally, earneſtly, and effectually, ſo as to be rendered better men by our duly recollecting that God's goodneſs is on every ſide apparent, that his holineſs, juſtice, and mercy are demonſtrable from reaſon and ſcripture, and that all theſe attributes ſhould not only be tacitly acknowledged, but on proper occaſions openly extolled. For the rational and pious ſervice of declaring and extolling the divine attributes, no time can be more ſuitable, than when we are aſſembled for the exerciſe of religious worſhip; let us now therefore conſider them more diſtinctly, and ſhew that they are motives for ſeeking after God.

The goodneſs of God is apparent in the works of creation. If we look to the heavens, we are ſtruck with aſtoniſhment at

the bright luminaries which diffuſe through the world the comforts of light and heat, in proportion as the ſeveral parts of the earth approach nearer to them, or lie at a diſtance more remote from their influence: hence too the interchange of day and night, and the invariable order of ſeaſons returning at times appointed. DISC. I.

If we ſurvey the earth, what myriads of living creatures, what profuſion of aliments, what exuberance of delicacies do we find on it! Different as may be the powers, various as may be the ſituations, and contrary as may be the conditions of its rational and irrational inhabitants, yet for all, the bounty of heaven has provided means of happineſs ſuited to the peculiar ſtate of local climate or intellectual capacity allotted to each. There are indeed degrees of diſparity in the diſtribution of natural advantages; and thoſe who enjoy the greateſt portion ſhould be *moſt* thankful to that Almighty Being, who diſpenſes his gifts in ſuch manner as ſeemeth beſt to his unerring wiſdom, "dividing to "every man ſeverally as he willeth [1]." But

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 11.

DISC. I. notwithſtanding this inequality, ſtill enough is beſtowed on every ſpecies, every claſs, every order of animals, for the ſupport of exiſtence, and, generally ſpeaking, for the pleaſure of life.

Whence is man "ſo fearfully and wonderfully made[a]?" whence hath he ſuch exact ſymmetry, ſuch nice proportion, ſuch curious arrangement in the texture of his bodily frame? and whence hath he the more extraordinary faculties, by which he is enabled to apprehend, remember, reflect, reaſon, invent, will, and act inſtantaneouſly, as emergencies may require? Theſe are the faculties which diſtinguiſh man from the brute creation, and which give him the ſuperiority of mind over ſtrength incompetent to wiſdom. As the Divine Mind by its powerful energy directs every ſyſtem in the univerſe, ſo the human mind, enlightened as it is by God, ſubdues unto itſelf a great part of the irrational world. Mind is the principle which gives dominion; matter

[a] Pſ. cxxxix. 13. See Derham's Phyſico-Theology, B. v. throughout.

is

is inert and incapable of action till put in motion and impreſſed by mind. This is the law ordained by God throughout the whole compaſs of things created. Man ſhould conſider this, ſhould know in what lies his chief excellence, ſhould cultivate his underſtanding with the utmoſt diligence, ſhould continually bleſs the God who formed him thus capable of rational improvement, and who in ſimilitude intellectual, moral, and ſpiritual, "made man in his own image[3]." DISC. I.

From the earth, let us turn our attention to the waters. "They that go down to the "ſea in ſhips, and occupy their buſineſs in "great waters, theſe ſee the works of the "Lord, and the wonders which even in "the deep[4]" he doeth for the children of men. In the fury of ſtorms, and the raging of tempeſts, the force of Almighty *Power* is awfully diſplayed, and makes the firſt impreſſion on the mind of the obſerver. But power is not the only principle, which herein operates; the Divine *Goodneſs* is alſo working in the midſt of whirlwind, ſtorm,

[3] Gen. i. 26. [4] Pſ. cvii. 23.

DISC. I. and hurricane. For hence thoſe maſſes of collected waters, which in ſtagnant repoſe would become putrid[s], are by violent impulſe accelerated to renew their motion; and by being agitated they throw off thoſe particles, which would otherwiſe have tended to corruption. Preſerved in a ſtate of ſalubrity, ſometimes by extraordinary conculſions, and regularly by flux and reflux of their tide, the ſeas are infinitely conducive to the ſervice of man. They exerciſe his ingenuity in conſtructing, what are the moſt ſtupendous efforts of human invention, the veſſels in which conveyance is ſafely effected to the moſt diſtant regions of the globe: they connect by mutual interchange of ſuperfluous product and mutual ſupply of deſirable, if not neceſſary, materials, the

[s] Venti aquas oceani, paludum, lacuum, fluminum, foſſarum movent, ne ſtagnando putreſcant: quotieſcunque enim in plagâ oceani, vel lacus, diuturnæ regnaverint malaciæ, aquæ propter res diverſas tam ex regno vegetabili, animali, quàm foſſili admiſtas, putreſcunt, fœtent, et morbos excitant, ſæpè admodùm malignos, qui oborto vento, aquâ motâ, fœtore ſublato, ſponte ceſſant.

Introductio ad Philoſophiam Auct. MUSSCHENBROEK, v. ii. ſ. 2629. 7.

whole

whole race of mankind inhabiting countries which can poſſibly be explored by adventurous navigators: thus they are the means of encouraging induſtry at home, and of extending commerce, the arts of civilization, and a knowledge of religion, to men not yet emerged from a ſtate of barbariſm. DISC. I.

From the boſom of the deep moreover iſſue[6] thoſe vapours, which being raiſed and purified by the heat of the ſun firſt form themſelves into thick clouds, and then either ſubſide in lofty mountains, the reſervoirs of great rivers; or penetrate by gradual rains into hills, the ſources of leſs ſprings; or deſcend by gentle ſhowers on the fields and plains, which are thereby fertilized. Thus not only in his more ſublime acts, not only in his more obvious and ſtriking gifts, is the goodneſs of God to be diſcerned and ac-

[6] Maria ad conſtitutionem terræ hujus omnino requiruntur, idque ut ex iis per calorem ſolis vapores copioſè ſatis excitentur, qui vel in nubes coacti decidant in pluviis, et terram omnem ad procreationem vegetabilium irrigent et nutriant; vel in frigidis montium verticibus condenſati (ut aliqui cum ratione philoſophantur) decurrant in fontes et flumina.

NEWTONI Principia, L. 3. prop. 41. page 473. ed. 1723.

know-

DISC. I. knowledged: it meets us in every minute particular of his providence; it ſpeaks to us in every ſmalleſt inſtance of care for the preſervation of the world he hath created; it is pointed out to us "even by the little cloud, "though riſing from the ſea diminutive, "and like a man's hand [7]."

Theſe works of creation, to us ſo beneficial, are all aſcribed to the goodneſs of God; and juſtly ſo: for whence, but from this cauſe, *could* it proceed, that the heavens ſhould be thus illuminated, that the earth ſhould be thus furniſhed, that ſuch an infinitude of living creatures ſhould exiſt, that man ſhould be endued with ſuch ſuperior powers; that ſun, moon, and ſtars, that land and waters ſhould be thus inſtrumental towards the conveniences and comforts of man! That theſe wonderful effects ſhould be produced from chance is impoſſible, becauſe chance, as it means nothing, ſo it can do nothing: the very commoneſt piece of mechaniſm in uſe amongſt us could not be made by chance; much leſs could a world, in which certain ends are made correſponding with certain cauſes.

[7] 1 Kings, xviii. 44.

Fate,

Fate is nothing, Fortune is nothing, Neceſſity is nothing; mere words, to which perſonal exiſtence cannot be aſſigned, nor mental foreſight be attributed. All that we hear then of Chance, Fate, Fortune, Neceſſity, (and frequently we do hear them mentioned when GOD alone ſhould be acknowledged,) all that we hear of theſe non-entities is vague talk, indiſtinct language, unmeaning folly. Nor much better is the uſe we make of the term Nature: if thereby any creative power independent of God be intimated, it is a term equally ſenſeleſs and unfounded as Chance, Fate, Fortune, and Neceſſity: there is no creative or preſerving power but what originates from God, to whoſe ſole will the creation[a] and preſervation of all things are primarily to be aſcribed, and to whoſe goodneſs alone all that we have and all that we expect are ultimately to be referred!

DISC. I.

[a] Τι τουτο; ἡλιος ὀφθαλμος λεγει· τι τουτο; βροντη ακοη λεγει· τι ταυτα ὡραια, και καλα, και περιοδοι, και μεταβολαι, και κρασεις ἀερων, και ζωων γενεσεις, και καρπων φυσεις; Θεου παντα ἐργα ἡ ψυχη λεγει, και τον τεχνιτην ποθεῖ, και καταμανθανει της τεχνης.

Max. Tyr. Diſſ. 17. p. 195. Markland's edit.

If

DISC. I. If God be good, he is alſo holy. Perfect in his nature, governed by no paſſions, uncontrouled in his will, and unimpeded in his operations, He is removed at infinite diſtance from the weakneſs, the blindneſs, the depravity, under which we labour. Yet even in man, with all theſe infirmities, there is a ſenſe, there is even an admiration and love of what is holy. Now every good quality in man created, muſt have been imparted to him by his Creator, and muſt be poſſeſſed by the ſame Almighty Being in proportion as much greater, as the power of creating is ſuperior to total inability of cauſing any original exiſtence. If then man has a knowledge of holineſs, and a veneration for ſo conſummate perfection, the ſame muſt be inherent in God to degrees higher than we can conceive: and as nothing can intervene to obſtruct the Almighty in purſuing what he ſees to be ſupremely excellent, ſo from the eſſence of his nature it is morally impoſſible but that he muſt be tranſcendently holy; and as ſuch, can do nothing, can approve nothing, but what is intrinſically and

and actually right. Thus ſuggeſts our own reaſon, and thus ſpeaks the unerring "teſti- "mony of the Lord[9]" in the more ſure words of revelation. DISC. I.

As God is holy, ſo alſo he is juſt: juſt in the adminiſtration of his moral government, and conſequently in his hatred and puniſhment of ſin.

God is juſt in the adminiſtration of his moral government. Let not appearances in this world diſturb nor miſlead you to form haſty, harſh, and falſe concluſions. What if in this life virtue be oppreſſed and vice triumphant? what if infamy be decked with the trappings of plunder, and honeſty be clad in a homely garb? what if violation of law do enrich the iniquitous, whilſt "patient continuance in well-doing[10]" prolongs the difficulties of indigence to the induſtrious? what if the wicked do flouriſh in ſeeming proſperity, whilſt the righteous are humbled under circumſtances untoward and afflicting? yet in all theſe allotments of temporal advantages, the juſtice of God's

[9] Pſ. xix. 7. [10] Rom. ii. 7.

moral

DISC. I. moral adminiſtration is in no degree impeached. For ſurely as there is a God, ſo ſurely there muſt be a future ſtate, in which all diſproportionate irregularities of this nature ſhall be rectified according to the moſt impartial rules of equity. From the God, who is to render fit recompenſe to every ſoul, for actions done, and intentions ſo conceived, as that they would have been executed had opportunity permitted; from him as no deeds are concealed nor deſigns hidden, ſo nothing but the moſt righteous diſpenſation of ſpiritual happineſs or miſery can reaſonably be expected or poſſibly be aſſigned. And this is the firſt, chief, moſt firm, and moſt ſatisfactory ground, on which the Divine Juſtice is to be vindicated. We are placed here merely for probation: to a ſtate of future exiſtence we are all tending: the diſtribution of temporal advantages has no farther connection with the happineſs or miſery which is to enſue, than as they ſerve to make us either better or worſe men in our moral conduct. In the ſight of God, and towards the attainment of divine approbation,

bation, "He only that doeth righteouſneſs, DISC.
"is righteous";[n] beyond that, all is ſhew, I.
and "vanity of vanities."

But even in this life, the juſtice of God is perhaps more clear than careleſs obſervers may imagine. Thoſe, whom the world may call good, are perhaps leſs virtuous than men eſteem them; and thoſe, whom public opinion condemns as abandoned, may poſſibly not be ſo bad as they are reputed. Then again it is to be conſidered, that from outward appearance no true eſtimate can be made of internal and mental feeling. The heart of him who wears openly the ſemblance of gaiety, may in ſecret be pierced with the ſtings of remorſe, and wrung with the agonies of deſpair: on the other hand, what to indifferent ſpectators may ſeem miſery in the condition of the virtuous, may not be felt as ſuch by thoſe who bear it, becauſe they have been habituated to humble reſignation, and becauſe they have been accuſtomed to regard all the diſpenſations of Providence as intended either for encouragement in good-

[n] 1 St. John, iii. 7.

neſs,

DISC. I. neſs, or amendment of ſome improper diſpoſition. Bitter may be the remedy applied for the diſeaſe; yet when ſanity is to be procured, the object attainable beguiles the pain through which it is to be acquired: thus every one ſubmiſſive to the divine diſpoſal, however he may feel the ſeverity of chaſtiſement, yet he looks forward to the end of moral diſcipline for which correction has been inflicted, and finds comfort in the aſſurance that none but merciful effects can by any means be deſigned in what a wiſe, good, and benevolent God either appoints or permits.

But there is another and more awful point of view, in which the juſtice of God is to be repreſented and conſidered. Juſtice requires that ſooner or later the voluntary demerits and wilful tranſgreſſions of every being, that can know and practiſe the moral duties incumbent on him, ſhould be ſo [19] puniſhed in the ſight of intellectual ſpirits, as that every tongue ſhall confeſs the equity of the

[19] See Diſcourſe I. Part III. p. 46, 7, 8. vol. i. edit. 1764. of Several Diſcourſes by Biſhop SHERLOCK. See alſo Diſc. I. Part IV. Pages 62, 63, 64.

condemn-

condemnation, and every ſoul be convinced that the exerciſe of goodneſs and the commiſſion of wickedneſs do not eventually terminate in the ſame effects. If this final retribution be not ordained for the different courſes which we are now purſuing, then virtue and vice are mere names; it muſt be matter of indifference what we do; we need but evade the laws of man, the divine law againſt ſin can be of no validity. But ſay, does our conſcience approve this confounding of good and evil, and bid us hope to eſcape puniſhment after tranſgreſſion? Does it not rather fill us with apprehenſions, that though we may elude the vigilance of human eyes, yet to God all our doings muſt be open; though we may paſs with impunity from earthly tribunals, yet we muſt be accountable to that moſt juſt Judge, who implanted in our ſouls the light of reaſon and common judgment to diſcern between right and wrong, for the expreſs purpoſe that we ſhould never deſignedly and knowingly offend againſt what the general ſenſe of human nature acknowledges to be good? The DISC. I.

DISC. I. dictates of conſcience, the concurrent voice of mankind, and, above all, the declarations of ſcripture aſſert and enforce this important truth, that "God hath appointed a time, in "which he will judge the world with "righteouſneſs and the people with equi-"ty [13]."

"But who may abide the day of his "coming, or who may ſtand when he ap-"peareth [14]?" Who among the ſons of men, from Adam their progenitor to the ſoul that ſhall laſt be quickened, will preſumptuouſly claim at the hands of God a reward for immaculate, unſinning, perfect obedience to the law, by which his moral conduct was to be guided, whether that law were intimated to him by the tendencies and reflections of his own mind, or whether it were more forcibly inculcated on him by the explicit commands of divine Revelation? In neither caſe, under no diſpenſation, has man been ſo innocent, as never to have ſwerved from his duty. Every individual, whoſe mind has been informed ſufficiently to diſtinguiſh be-

[13] Pſ. xcvi. xiii. [14] Mal. iii. 2.

tween

tween right and wrong, muſt be conſcious to himſelf of *ſome* deviation from the line of *ſtrict* rectitude in thought, word, and deed; and under conviction of ſuch offence, there is not a ſoul that can come before the moſt Holy God, without fearful apprehenſions of divine diſpleaſure. Reaſon leads us to this concluſion, but cannot relieve us from the ſtate of anxiety in which by its deductions it hath now placed us. God is Holy, man is ſinful; God is Juſt[15], ſin muſt be puniſhed; it is righteous, it is ſalutary, it is neceſſary that ſin ſhould be condemned and endure the conſequences which, from the neglect, the contempt, the violation of God's written or[16] unwritten law muſt, according to the eſtabliſhed order of divine government and agreeably with the immutable and eternal difference of things, enſue to the tranſgreſſor! Reaſon carries us to this awful point, and

DISC. I.

[15] Εχεται γαρ αδικησας τη δικη.
PLUTARCH Περι των ὑπο τω Θειω βραδιως, &c. p. 554. vol. ii. ed. Frankfort.

[16] Αγραφους δε τινας οισθα, εφη, ω Ιππια, νομους; τους γ' ουν πασιν, εφη, χωρα κατα ταυτα νομιζομενους.
XEN. Mem. l. 4. c. 4. ſ. 19.

DISC. I. there leaves us: thankful therefore ſhould we be to our Bleſſed Redeemer, that when reaſon has gone to its full extent, and given us up to [17] deſpair, Revelation comes to our aid, directs our views to God's mercy, animates us with hope, and conſoles us with aſſurance, that although in ſeverity of judgment the effect of ſin muſt have been condemnation, yet to the ſincerely contrite and unfeignedly penitent will be given pardon; ſince God hath ordained means by which to reconcile Juſtice with Mercy, by which to convince both men and angels how heinous ſin muſt be, and yet to receive with paternal compaſſion the ſpirits that return to Him with ſhame and ſorrow for paſt tranſgreſſions, and that for the future earneſtly and anxiouſly purpoſe amendment of what has been irrational, immoral, and irreligious in their conduct. The Son of God "appeared to put away ſin by the ſacrifice of "of himſelf [18]." He is the propitiation, not

[17] Nam ſi puniendus eſt, cuicunque pravum maleficumque ingenium eſt, pœna neminem excipiet.

SENECA de Irâ, l. 2. c. 31. p. 570. ed. Paris, 1613.

[18] Heb. ix. 26.

for

for our ſins only, but "alſo for the ſins of "the whole world [19]." He hath made an atonement to offended Juſtice, hath expiated the moral guilt of all mankind, hath borne the puniſhment due to the corruption of our nature, hath opened a way for the exerciſe of forgiveneſs towards all that deteſt, renounce, and forſake their evil habits. Merciful is God in all his diſpenſations towards us even in this life! He comforts our afflictions, preſerves us from dangers, prolongs our days that we may have time to repent and amend our lives: but all this would terminate in the wretchedneſs of man; our repentance and amendment would be ineffectual towards the obtaining of pardon for ſins paſt, had the work of Redemption never been wrought: that work therefore is indeed a moſt ſtupendous act of mercy in the God who appointed, and in the Lord who wrought it!

DISC. I.

It appears then that Goodneſs, Holineſs, Juſtice, and Mercy are attributes of God; and they have been thus repreſented, becauſe

[19] 1 St. John, ii. 2.

DISC. I. they are among the beſt and firſt motives which ſhould induce us to ſeek him. For as God is good, we are bound by every principle of gratitude to ſeek him with thankſgiving: as He is holy, we are inexcuſable if being Moral Agents we do not ſeek the ſublimeſt pattern of all Moral Excellence: as He is juſt, we ſhould be impelled through reverential awe to ſeek Him by the moſt uniform and exact obedience, which is compatible with our nature: as He is merciful, by a deep ſenſe of his compaſſion for our infirmities, and a due eſtimate of the Redemption vouchſafed unto us, we ſhould be actuated to ſeek Him, with hatred of ſin, with grief for miſdoings, with the filial piety due to a Father ſo unſpeakably benevolent, and with ingenuous concern, leſt at any time we diſpleaſe a Benefactor, who hath poured on us ſuch abundance of bleſſings.

Theſe are the beſt and firſt motives, which ſhould incite us to ſeek after God. And now let us conſider the end of ſo doing, which will be a farther encouragement to the ſame duty. "Seek ye after God, and

"your

" your ſoul ſhall live;" live in this world, live in the ſtate of future exiſtence. DISC. I.

By *living* is not meant mere *animation*; for in that ſenſe every ſoul *liveth* here, and ſhall *live* hereafter; for " ALL that are in " their graves [20]" ſhall come forth from the earth, and " the ſea ſhall give up the dead " that are in it [21]," at the final conſummation of all things belonging to this world. When it is ſaid, that, " by ſeeking after God, your " ſoul ſhall *live*," the promiſe of *life* is in a more exalted acceptation than what is commonly affixed to the term *life*. You ſhall live to the purpoſes of rational and ſpiritual happineſs on earth and in the heavens: and nothing ſhort of this can, by a man who knows and loves moral excellence and religious principles, be juſtly and ſtrictly deemed *life*. For ſay, ſhall the man, whoſe groſs appetites crave continual indulgence in pleaſures intemperate; ſhall the man, whom unbounded profligacy, and a *perpetual* courſe of frivolous diſſipation, *inceſſantly* diverts from ſerious thoughts; ſhall the man, whom

[20] St. John, v. 28. [21] Rev. xx, 13.

DISC. I. intenſe application to buſineſs, even laudable, overwhelms with ſuch conſtant anxiety, haraſſes with ſuch unremitted care, and occupies with ſo entire poſſeſſion of all his mental faculties, as to leave him no leiſure, nor inclination, for ſeaſonable retirement, calm conſideration, and religious duties; ſhall men of ſuch deſcriptions be deemed to *live?* They do indeed exiſt as animated creatures; but they live not to any rational or moral purpoſe, and therefore, conſidered as intellectual and ſpiritual beings, they live not at all: for their ſoul is dead to the calls of reaſon, dead to the ſatisfactions ariſing from mental improvement, dead to that moſt exquiſite of all feelings, the approbation of conſcience for well-doing, dead to proper regard for thoſe who ſhould be deareſt to them, dead to all manly, liberal, and generous ſentiment, dead even to the God that made and preſerves them!

Both [22] Reaſon and Revelation concur in pronouncing as dead, all thoſe who are devoted to vice, and who pervert the very end

[22] Iſti verò mihi defunctorum loco ſunt. SEN. Ep. 122.

for which existence was given them. Not so are those, who seek after God with seasonable, sober, and unaffected piety! They are alive to all the great and important duties, which belong to them as members of civil society; alive to all that concerns the welfare of their families; alive to the dictates of reason, the improvements of reflection, the comforts of an applauding conscience; they are alive to the calm, but powerful, influence which arises from the observance of religious duties; they are alive to themselves, to their fellow-creatures, to their Maker! and thus they answer the designs for which they were created, by right dispositions and useful employment, by pious affections and rational service towards God and man, leading what may truly and properly be called *life*; the life suited to the better, *i. e.* the spiritual and immortal part of man's nature, So speaks [23] Reason, and so the Word of God.

DISC. I.

[23] Εἰς καρπος της επιγειου ζωης διαθεσις ὁσια, και πραξεις κοινωνικαι. ANTONIN. l. 6. f. 30.

See Gataker's Note, p. 241.

The

DISC. I. The life, which in this ſtate we have but begun, in another ſhall be continued to endleſs duration. The ſame diſpoſitions which we have cultivated in this beginning of exiſtence, will follow us to the period which ſhall next ſucceed: the full effects of right action, and the pure joys of habitual goodneſs, will then be experienced without any of that alloy, by which, from various cauſes incident to our preſent condition, the beſt of men feel their happineſs incomplete and imperfect. But ſtill they perſevere "in ſeeking "after God," in a manner ſuitable to different occaſions; acting under a ſenſe of his omniſcience and omnipreſence, amidſt all the engagements of public buſineſs; referring to Him the direction of all events, the allotment of all diſpenſations, the controul of all ſecond cauſes, the dominion over the univerſe; acknowledging Him in all their ways; raiſing to Him their ſouls with ſupplication and thankſgiving in the hours of retirement; and joining in the ſolemnities of Public Worſhip, at ſtated and proper ſeaſons. Thus through the whole of their general conduct,

conduct, their ſecret thoughts, their open profeſſions, do they uniformly and ſteadfaſtly "ſeek after God," convinced that it is their bounden duty ſo to do, and aſſured that, by ſuch reaſonable and religious practice, their ſoul ſhall live to undiminiſhed and abſolute felicity!

DISCOURSE II.

The Pre-eminence of the SON of GOD; and that CHRIST is that SON of GOD.

COL. i. 18.

That in all things He might have the Pre-eminence.

DISC. II. WITH GOD the FATHER, the author of all exiſtence and the fountain [1] of Deity, have been united from all eternity in

[1] "Whatever the idolatrous heathens think or believe, "to us (who are Chriſtians) there is but one, who is truly "and eſſentially God, though indeed there be more than "one perſon in the Deity. *The Father*, who is the founda- "tion of the Deity, communicating His divine nature "to the other two perſons, and *of whom* are all things. "It is a term which ſignifieth the primary cauſe and "author of all things."

Annotation in the Continuation of POOLE's Work. 1 Cor. viii. 6.

one

one glory, one will, one authority, the SON of GOD, and the HOLY SPIRIT. All the dispensations of GOD the FATHER towards man, the SON of GOD hath conducted: the works of creation and the more merciful acts of redemption though ordained by GOD the FATHER, were effected by the SON of GOD. Justly therefore by St. Paul is "pre-eminence in all things" ascribed unto Him, who in his pre-existent state was so powerful, in his humiliation so signal, in his resurrection and ascension so glorious. DISC. II.

Let the farther illustration of this pre-eminence, and some few remarks in proof that CHRIST was that SON of GOD, be the subjects to engage our present attention.

The first view of the Son's pre-eminence is in the work of creation. The Father willed, the Son accomplished the production of all things. Hence, though in the first and strictest sense, God the Father is our Creator, yet in a more enlarged and secondary acceptation God the Son is our Creator

DISC. II. Creator alſo; ſince the Father ordained, and the Son wrought the wonders of creation. This creative power in the Son the Scriptures aſſert in the moſt expreſs terms: "All things (ſays St. John) were made by "Him, and without Him was made not any "one thing, which was made [2]." St. Paul affirms the ſame: "By Him all things were "created that are in heaven, and that are "in earth, viſible and inviſible, whether they "be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, "or powers: all things were created by "Him and for him. And he is before all "things, and by Him all things conſiſt [3]." "God hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken to us "by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir "of all things, by whom alſo he made the "worlds [4]." The ſentiments we are to entertain of the Son's dignity from conſidering theſe acts of omnipotence, which he was enabled to perform, can be no other than the moſt ſublime and exalted, the moſt reverential and grateful: for He who

[2] St. John, i. 3. [3] Col. i. 16, 17. [4] Hebr. i. 2.

had

had the power of calling into existence the very first elements of all material substance, must be endued with might past all comprehension; He who hath imparted to us our life, our faculties, the various blessings which we enjoy, must have been infinitely benevolent to mankind. His power excites our admiration; His benevolence claims our veneration and love. DISC. II.

The next view of the Son's pre-eminence is in his conduct of the church. God hath never suffered the idea of His existence and providence to be entirely lost from the world. Wicked as were the generations which called down the vengeance of heaven on the race of man, yet there were found some few righteous, who preserved the original [3] faith delivered from their fathers, and who were supported by that faith amidst the most afflicting calamities. To such did God reveal himself by His Son, who from the beginning of the world hath been the messenger of the

[3] See St. Paul to the Hebrews, ch. xi. 7, &c.

"covenant,"

DISC. II. "covenant," and the great Mediator between God and man. Our Saviour ſays of himſelf to the Jews, "your father Abraham rejoiced to ſee my day; he ſaw it, and was glad [6];" he ſaw through faith the coming of Chriſt, which was then diſtant, but acted on that principle, as though the bleſſings of redemption were actually preſent.

The Son of God, who conducted Abraham the Father of the Faithful, wrought deliverance [7] from Egypt for the Jews his

[6] St. John, viii. 56.

[7] See Acts, vii. v. 35. *Manus* ſignificat tum potentiam tum inſtrumentum. Significat non tantum Dominum angeli miniſterio Moſen vocâſſe, ſed et Moſen angeli manu ac poteſtate fuiſſe armatum, Deumque et Moſis et redemptionis per eum præſtandæ regimen commiſiſſe huic Angelo. Quare Angelus iſte qui Exod. iii. apparuit erat Filius Dei, *Angelus faciei ejus* de quo Eſa. lxiii. 9. *Angelus Fœderis*, et ipſe *Dominus*. Mal. iii. 1. Vid. Exod. xxiii. 20, 21. and xxxiii. 2. Num. xx. 16. 1 Cor. x. 9.

Synopſis Polli.

See alſo Dr. Owen's "Expoſition of the Two Firſt Chapters of the Epiſtle to the Hebrews," V. 2. c. 1. p. 12. and V. 2. c. 2. p. 164. Fol. ed. 1668.

The paſſages, to which reference is here made, prove Dr. Macknight to have erred in his note on Hebr. i. 2.

See alſo vol. i. p. 66. of the Author's Diſcourſes.

deſcendants.

descendants. All that was done, all that was communicated, all that was instituted with respect to the Jews, was through the intermediate agency of the Son. "In all "their affliction, He, *i. e.* God, was afflict-"ed; and the Angel of His presence, *i. e.* "the Son of God, saved them; in His love "and in His pity He redeemed them; and "He bore them, and carried them all the "days of old[s]," says Isaiah: and the principal object of all these merciful and wondrous works was to preserve in the world a knowledge of the true God, and faith in the Son who from God was to be sent into it. DISC. II.

Thus far we have seen the Son's pre-eminence in a state of glory. We must now behold him in a condition humiliating, a condition however in which he was still pre-eminent in wonderful powers, in exemplary life, in heavenly wisdom, and in what to us would be most painful pre-

[s] Is. lxiii. 9.

DISC. II.

eminence, in ſuffering and agonies. The miracles, which he wrought[9] continually and openly, proved him infinitely ſuperior to any one who before him had appeared in a prophetic character: the immaculate innocence of his unblemiſhed manners beſpoke him much more than human; for alas! of human beings, there is not one "who does not in many things "offend often[10]." His diſcernment even of ſecret thoughts, conceived only in the hearts of men, bore teſtimony to his divine omniſcience[11]: his illuſtration of moral precepts, his expoſition of religious truths; the clearneſs, the force, the energy with which he taught, impreſſed the hearers of his words with ſtrong conviction, that he was endued with ſuch underſtanding as belonged not to the

[9] Chriſt (and ſo far as we can find, He alone) had a power of *working miracles whenever he pleaſed*. Doddridge's Family Expoſitor. Sect. 176. N. i. vol. 2. ed. 1761.

[10] St. James, iii. 2.

[11] See Archbiſhop Newcome's Obſervations on our Lord's Conduct. Part. 1. ſ. 7. p. 115. edit. 1795.

moſt

most learned of their teachers. Amidst the poverty, to which without murmurs he submitted, the insults which with calm serenity he endured, the aggravated circumstances of persecution which with persevering patience he underwent, and the cruel agonies of unmerited death which with the most entire resignation, undismayed fortitude, and even forgiveness of his enemies, he suffered; amidst all these, to human apprehension and human feelings the most afflicting evils, he was pre-eminently marked out as a man of sorrows, but appeared pre-eminently victorious in mind over the bitterest pangs of grief, the severest oppressions of iniquity, the most horrid tortures of malice. DISC. II.

Do you ask *why* the Son of God should have thus shewn unparallelled condescension? Reason will suggest some causes, but Revelation only can impart to us the true motive.

He came in poverty, partly to convince the pride of man, that all vanity in external possessions is truly contemptible, since God

DISC. II. weighs the hearts, and not the affluence of his ſervants: he thus came farthermore, that the truth of his miſſion might be eſtabliſhed, not by means of that favourable prejudice with which opulence and rank gain intereſted followers, but by the mere evidence of ſupernatural facts, and the conviction ariſing from that evidence. By this method men are not [12] overawed, but led by their underſtanding, to acknowledge that He, who wrought ſuch miracles, muſt be more than human, and as ſuch ought to be believed when he aſſerts his miſſion from Heaven.

He endured affliction, reproach, and ignominy, that he might exemplify the precepts of reſignation, forbearance, and meekneſs, which he had taught his diſciples [13]. Are we labouring under the preſſure of want? Are we diſtreſſed by untoward and calamitous circumſtances? Are we miſrepreſented by calumny, maligned by envy, reviled by detraction? Are

[12] See Bp. SHERLOCK, vol. 1. Diſc. 3. Part 1. p. 104. 106. and vol. 3. Diſc. 10. p. 260. ed. 1764.

[13] See Bp. SHERLOCK, vol. 3. Diſc. 10. p. 261.

our

our best endeavours to do good opposed and misconceived? Are our purest intentions perverted by the most distorting constructions? And after long exertion of every faculty for the service of our fellow-creatures, should we be deserted by the world, and given up to die forsaken and unpitied? All these are miseries confessedly grievous; yet grievous as they are, they were sustained by the Son of God! His sufferings have sanctified affliction and made it an instrument of converting us to Himself. In the midst of our sorrows, however keen they may be, we are encouraged to direct our thoughts towards his example, and thence learn how to bear our smaller portion of evil, after the pattern of Him who experienced a measure of woe, beyond comparison exceeding all that can fall to our lot. DISC. II.

Of practical utility in the condition of our Lord, thus much we can discern of ourselves; but the Scriptures only can tell us the final purpose and most important end, for which tribulation and anguish,

DISC. II. torments and death were endured by Him. "Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe "things [14]?" *i.e.* was it not foretold by the Prophets that the Meſſiah ſhould be deſpiſed and rejected, a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief? "Thus it is written, and thus "it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer [15];" that all predictions concerning him might be accompliſhed. St. Paul "reaſoned (with the "Jews of Theſſalonica) out of the Scrip-"tures, opening and alleging that Chriſt "muſt needs have ſuffered [16];" and to the Hebrews he ſays, "it became Him, for "whom are all things, and by whom are "all things, in bringing many ſons unto "glory, to make the Captain of their ſal-"vation perfect through ſufferings [17]." And wherefore theſe ſufferings? Wherefore death itſelf? Plainly, for this reaſon; that "God, "ſending his own Son, in the likeneſs of "ſinful fleſh, might condemn ſin in the "fleſh [18];" the meaning of which words is,

[14] St. Luke, xxiv. 26.
[15] St. Luke, xxiv. 46.
[16] Acts, xvii. 3.
[17] Heb. ii. 10.
[18] Rom. viii. 3.

that

that whereas ſin had been committed by human nature, and thence Divine diſpleaſure had been entailed on the whole race of man, ſo God ordained that ſin ſhould be puniſhed in human nature, and thence the race of man be put in a capacity of recovering Divine favour. Therefore He ſent his Son in the likeneſs of man who is ſinful fleſh; ſubjected Him in the form and faſhion of man to be an atoning ſacrifice for the general ſin of man; and thus in the moſt aweful and ſtriking manner declared his abhorrence of moral guilt, and puniſhed it with the ſeverity of ſtrict juſtice. To this effect are the declarations of the Apoſtles; "For us God hath made him ſin "(*i. e.* a ſacrifice for ſin) who knew no "ſin[19]." "Chriſt hath redeemed us from "the curſe of the law, by being made a "curſe (*i. e.* by undergoing the puniſhment "due to moral tranſgreſſion) for us[20]." "Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us, leaving us an DISC. II.

[19] 2 Cor. v. 21. [20] Gal. iii. 13.

DISC. II. "example, that ye ſhould follow his ſteps. "Who did no ſin, neither was guile found "in his mouth. Who when he was reviled, "reviled not again; when he ſuffered he "threatened not, but committed himſelf to "Him that judgeth righteouſly. Who his "own ſelf bare our ſins in his own body "on the tree, (*i.e.* on the croſs,) that we "being dead unto ſin ſhould live unto "righteouſneſs; by whoſe ſtripes ye were "healed [21]."

But from this ſtate of humiliation, from death and the grave, let us now paſs, and behold the pre-eminence of God the Son reſuming his glory. The moſt eloquent of the Apoſtles ſeems to labour for expreſſions adequate to the ſublime ideas he had conceived of our Lord's authority and dignity upon his aſcenſion. Obſerve the following paſſages, and lift up your ſouls to the ſame devout and fervent reverence for the Son of God, with which the inſpired writer is animated: "God (ſays St. Paul) raiſed Him

[21] 1 St. Peter, ii. 21—24.

"from

" from the dead, and ſet Him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but alſo in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church[22]." " Wherefore God alſo hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name, which is above every name; that at the name of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father[23]." To ſum up the whole of St. Paul's deſcription, in direct terms he ſays of Chriſt, " who is over all, God bleſſed for ever[24]." DISC. II.

With the language of St. Paul, which aſſerts that all things are put in ſubjection

[22] Eph. i. 20—22.
[23] Phil. ii. 9—11.
[24] Rom. ix. 5.

DISC. II. to the Son of God, concur the words of St. Peter; who declares concerning Chriſt, that "He is gone into heaven, and is on "the right hand of God, angels, authori-"ties, and powers being made ſubject to "him[25]." Theſe high conceptions and lofty aſſertions of our Lord's Divine nature and government, are ſupported partly by his own prayer[26]; and more ſtrongly by the expreſs words, "All power is given "unto me in heaven and in earth[27];" which He ſpake when the redemption of the world had been completed[28]."

And now let us reflect on the repreſentation, which the Scriptures exhibit, of God the Son.

It appears that in the whole œconomy of divine adminiſtration with reſpect to man,

[25] 1 St. Peter, iii. 22.

[26] St. John, xvii. 5.

[27] St. Matt. xxviii. 18.

[28] See Biſhop SHERLOCK, vol. 4. Diſc. 1. p. 9. 18. 53. in which are pointed out the three diſtinct ſtates of our Lord's antecedent glory; humiliation; and exaltation.

God has ordained that it ſhould be conducted by the intermediate agency of his eternal Son. It is reaſonable as well as ſcriptural to ſuppoſe, that the method of God's government over all that concerns the world we inhabit, ſhould be ſomewhat of this nature: for every thing around us beſpeaks a ſyſtem of agency through intermediate cauſes. Life, preſervation, ſuſtenance, improvement, all the advantages and all the comforts we enjoy, are derived to us inſtrumentally [29] through parents, friends, benefactors, or others, who by va- DISC. II.

[29] See Biſhop BUTLER's Analogy, Part. 2. c. 5. The whole analogy of nature removes all imagined preſumption againſt the general notion of *a mediator between God and Man.* For we find all living creatures are brought into the world, and their life in infancy is preſerved by the inſtrumentality of others: and every ſatisfaction of it, ſome way or another, is beſtowed by the like means. So that the viſible government, which God exerciſes over the world, is by the inſtrumentality and mediation of others. P. 284. edit. ſixth.

See An Eſſay "On the Mediation of Chriſt," in Vol. 2. of "A new literal Tranſlation of all the Apoſtolical Epiſtles," by Dr. MACKNIGHT.

rious

DISC. II. rious channels and different branches communicate from one generation to another the bleſſings of ſociety. In the world inanimate alſo, we ſee an infinite arrangement of eſtabliſhed effects ariſing uniformly from certain given cauſes: the ſucceſſion of effects deſcends gradually as the cauſes deſcend in order one below another from primary and principal to ſecondary and ſubordinate. No one, who obſerves that the viſible parts of the world are influenced by the interpoſition of fewer or more inſtruments, can ſee any difficulty in admitting that God governs the whole of the univerſe, even the worlds of Spirits, by the intermediate power of his Son, "in whom "dwelleth the fulneſs of the Godhead[20];" much leſs can he heſitate to acknowledge, that on every principle of analogy, from what we actually ſee here, it is natural to conclude, that all which concerns man is ſo adminiſtered. In all his works God appeareth uniform: as intermediate

[20] Col. ii. 9.

agency

agency[11] predominates in the visible creation, we may conclude it has ever been adopted in those circumstances connected with man, which can be known to us only through revelation. DISC. II.

Of all these circumstances, it certainly at first sight appears to be the most extraordinary, that for the redemption of mankind our Saviour should endure the punishment. Yet if we consider this matter more attentively, we shall find that as to the fact of *one suffering for another*, there is nothing repugnant to what the sense of mankind had conceived many ages before Christianity was established; nor indeed repugnant to what we daily witness as happening in common life. Ancient history records many heroes, who from a persuasion that consequences beneficial to their country would thence ensue, with the most gene-

[11] "It is no part of natural religion to maintain that "God must do every thing immediately by himself, and in "his own person, without using the agency or ministry of "other beings."

Bp. SHERLOCK, vol. 4. Disc. 4. p. 121. ed. 1764.

DISC. II. rous patriotiſm devoted themſelves to death. In every rank of ſociety now exiſting among us, we find numberleſs inſtances of perſons, who are bearing inconveniencies, hardſhips, and afflictions, for the ſake of thoſe with whom they are connected, either by domeſtic or ſocial ties. Parents deny themſelves repoſe and comforts, that their children may be placed in ſituations of credit and competency: children, when arrived at years of maturity, not unfrequently repay the care beſtowed on their infant and tender age, by debarring themſelves of many gratifications, and by labouring with increaſed diligence, for the ſupport of parents. Many come forward in the hour of diſtreſs to the relief of friends, hoping to receive no other compenſation than the exquiſite pleaſure which ariſes from beneficence; and thinking no requital of ſervices conferred, in the ſmalleſt degree comparable to that of affectionate regard from thoſe who are aſſiſted. In the various occupations which different claſſes purſue, the ſeveral orders of men are each

in

in its respective business promoting the con- DISC.
venience of others: and so destructive to II.
health are many employments, that they accelerate mortality in proportion to the industry bestowed on them. For the peace and safety of the community at large, men in arms expose themselves to perilous situations. And in the annals of mankind there are many periods, in which, to secure and improve the happiness of a rising generation, the immediate actors have patiently submitted to the utmost extremities of severe distress. By extending this mode of illustration to other cases, which fall within our notice, we may plainly perceive, and be led to conclude, that a system of *vicarious* [32] *suf-*

[32] The world's being under the righteous government of God, does indeed imply, that finally and upon the whole every one shall receive according to his personal deserts: and the general doctrine of the whole Scripture is, that this shall be the completion of the Divine Government. But during the progress, and, for aught we know, even in order to the completion of this moral scheme, vicarious punishments may be fit and absolutely necessary.

See Bp. BUTLER's Analogy, Part II. c. 5. p. 309. edit. sixth.

fering

DISC. II. *fering* prevails through life. When therefore it pleaſed God to inflict puniſhment on Chriſt, He did indeed diſplay a ſtupendous act of Mercy in accepting the death of one for the reſtoration of millions to pardon, peace, and Divine Favour; yet, in the appointment that the felicity of others ſhould be produced by the death of a Redeemer, He ſtill purſued that general law by which His Providence ordains continually, that ſome ſhould ſuffer for the benefit of others. If we mark then the uniformity of Divine Adminiſtration in other inſtances, we ſhall readily allow that the death of Chriſt, conſidered merely on the ground of *one ſuffering for another*, is perfectly analogous with the ordinary diſpenſations of God's Providence.

But to the Son of God, who has been our Redeemer, and in all things the Mediator between God and man, what infinite obligations of gratitude and pious affection are incumbent upon us! The work of Redemption alone is in itſelf an inſtance of unbounded regard for us, which demands all the thankfulneſs of our ſouls. "Greater

"love

"love hath no man than this, that a man "lay down his life for his friends"[33]." Even amongst men, we feel ourselves indebted, and give tributes of honour and praise to those who hazard their persons in defence either of endangered individuals, or their injured country: but surely we should feel ourselves proportionably more indebted, and give tributes of praise and honour proportionably more abundant to the Son of God, as His death for the sin of the whole world was for a purpose infinitely more extensive in its beneficial effects, than the rescuing of an individual or a nation from peril; and as the dignity of His person is beyond all conception more exalted than what man can assume, without impious blasphemy. DISC. II.

As the Son of God is thus pre-eminent in the glory of the Father; as all things are made subject unto Him, whatever be their nature, whatever their excellence; who are we, that we should dare to withhold adoration towards Him! The Almighty Father hath spoken the word; "Let all the

[33] St. John, xv. 13.

DISC. II. "angels of God worſhip Him [34]:" what are we, that we ſhould preſume ourſelves exempt from a duty which is enjoined even on Immortal Spirits, who are of an order infinitely more high and perfect than fallen, frail, and ſinful man! If angels are too high for our pattern, we have men to follow; "the Apoſtles worſhipped Him [35]." Would we be ſatisfied that they were warranted in ſo doing? Hear the Son of God himſelf declaring, "The Father judgeth no "man, but hath committed all judgment "unto the Son, that all ſhould men honour "the Son, even as they honour the Father. "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth "not the Father which hath ſent Him [36]."

That the Son thus to be honoured was Jeſus the Chriſt, is proved by the concurrent teſtimony of the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles: indeed the eſtabliſhing of faith in Chriſt as the Meſſiah, the Saviour of man, and the

[34] Heb. i. 6.

[35] St. Luke xxiv. 52. Acts vii. 59, 60.

[36] St. John, v. 22, 23. See Bp. SHERLOCK, vol. iv. Diſc. I. p. 65, 66. ed. 1764.

Son

Son of God, is the great object for which they all write and preach. Christ himself in expreſs terms aſſerted his Divine [37] pre-eminence, and his Apoſtles perſevered in maintaining the facts which juſtified his claim to ſo exalted a title. The veracity of the Apoſtles was ſealed with the fulleſt and ſtrongeſt ſigns of confirmation that could poſſibly atteſt truth; for they preferred torture to ſilence, which they deemed criminal; they choſe death itſelf, with its bittereſt agonies, rather than act againſt the conviction of their own ſenſes, or deny what they palpably and poſitively knew to be the truth. Upon the teſtimony of witneſſes thus competent, diſintereſted, upright, and credible, we cannot but believe that "Jeſus "is the Chriſt and the Son of God [38];" through whoſe atonement and interceſſion we earneſtly pray that repentance for ſins relinquiſhed may be acceptable unto God, and tend to regain (what by tranſgreſſion DISC. II.

[37] See St. Matt. xxvi. 63, 64. St. Mark, xiv. 62. St. Luke, xxii. 70. St. John, xvii. 5.

[38] St. John, xx. 31.

DISC. II.

we had forfeited) peace to our ſouls, and the favour of the Almighty in a ſtate of future exiſtence.

That ſtate, to which the wiſeſt Heathens looked forward with hope, and the Jews [39] with lively faith, we Chriſtians expect with confident aſſurance: and it is on the certainty of exiſting after death, that the neceſſity of recovering Divine favour is founded, as being eſſential to our immortal happineſs. How far we may or may not be worthy of Divine approbation, the Son of God is finally to pronounce. Then He will appear again pre-eminent, as the Author of that ſentence, which is to aſſign our habitation either amongſt "the ſpirits of juſt "men made perfect [40]," or amongſt ſuch as are unfit for intercourſe with ſouls, whoſe delight will be, the exerciſe of piety to Almighty God, and the executing of thoſe moral and ſpiritual purpoſes, for which they exiſt and are bleſſed by Him! No one,

[39] See "The Doctrine of a Future State," in vol. vii. of Dr. Jortin's Sermons.

[40] Heb. xii. 23.

who retains any ſenſe of virtue, or who has the leaſt concern for his laſting happineſs, can conceive a ſeparation of the good from the bad, and a different allotment of reward and puniſhment even *poſſible to happen*, without ſome anxiety, leſt he ſhould fail of attaining an object ſo deſirable as that of ſpiritual recompenſe from a Righteous Judge. But ſuch ſeparation and ſuch allotment are to us more than *poſſible*, more than *probable*; they are *certain*. What Reaſon ſuggeſts as naturally to be expected, Revelation declares as abſolutely determined; and holding out the proſpect of what unqueſtionably will enſue at a future period, it urges us in the preſent life to be righteous, ſober, and godly. If upon the bare *poſſibility* that remorſe and anguiſh may be the puniſhments of ſin, to act wickedly were manifeſt imprudence; ſurely when that *poſſibility* is not only carried to *probability*, but extended to poſitive *certainty*, to perſiſt in wicked courſes were blind infatuation. Virtue and happineſs, ſin and miſery, are ſet DISC. II.

DISC. II. before us as inſeparably connected in the ultimate termination of moral conduct: as there is no other alternative, one or the other we *muſt* take; by prayer then to God may we ever be diſpoſed to make the wiſer and better choice!

DISCOURSE III.

On the Perſonality of the HOLY SPIRIT; and the Gifts imparted by Inſpiration.

ST. MATT. xxviii. 19.

Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt.

DISC. III.

THAT in quality of Divine Eſſence there can be but one godhead, and that in this quality God our Father, Chriſt our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit our Sanctifier, are united; is the doctrine of our Church, delivered unto us from the earlieſt ages of Chriſtianity. The authority, on which this doctrine is founded, is the ſenſe of Scriptures. For, as on the one hand the

DISC. III. Scriptures clearly maintain there is but one God, and yet, on the other, no leſs clearly aſſign Divine Appellations and Attributes, ſeverally and ſeparately, to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; ſo the inference to be drawn from theſe poſitions is, that in quality, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are of one and the ſame Divinity [1] in ſuch manner, as that, in the higheſt and moſt extended acceptation of the word, they are but one God.

The expreſs command of our Lord to his Apoſtles is, "Go ye therefore and teach all "nations, baptizing them in the name of the "Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy "Ghoſt." If we recollect that this command was given towards the cloſe of Chriſt's miniſtry upon earth, a ſeaſon when his inſtructions were peculiarly intereſting and important; and if we conſider, that in theſe His laſt inſtructions, the Apoſtles received the

[1] Trium diſtinctarum in unâ Divinitate Perſonarum hæc ſunt nomina.

Catechiſmus, Auctore A. Nowello,

See Bp. Cleaver's edition; or, vol. ii. of the "Enchiridion Theologicum," publiſhed at Oxford 1792.

ſubſtance

ſubſtance of what they were to deliver unto the world reſpecting the moſt ſublime parts of Chriſtian Revelation; we cannot but think it irreconcileable with the Divine wiſdom of our Lord, to imagine He would expreſs, in language indiſtinct and ambiguous, a commiſſion, which was intended to compriſe the firſt eſſential principles of the faith they were to propagate. As the Apoſtles were enjoined henceforth to admit converts, by baptizing them into a religion, which acknowledged a "Father, Son, and Holy "Ghoſt;" reverence towards the Author of that injunction will not ſuffer us to doubt that the words of it were meant to be direct, poſitive, and explicit. But, independently of this conſideration, the moſt obvious, eaſy, and natural interpretation of the paſſage will lead us to conclude, that if real ſubſiſtence is applicable to one term, it is alike applicable to all; if to the Father, ſo alſo to the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt[a]. And with this concluſion

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[a] If the Πνευμα Αγιον were but an attribute of the Πατηρ, there would be tautology in the baptiſmal form of words prescribed by our Lord; and the command to baptize "in "the

DISC. III.

cluſion agree many texts, ſome of which, concerning the Holy Spirit, ſhall now be adduced for your reflection and judgment.

To alleviate the ſorrow with which his diſciples were grieved, at the apprehenſions of loſing their Divine Maſter, our Lord encourages them with a promiſe, that after his departure, the Holy Spirit ſhould come to their aſſiſtance, conſolation, and inſtruction. "I will pray the Father, (ſays our "Saviour,) and He ſhall give you another "Comforter, that He may abide with you "for ever; even the Spirit of Truth[3]." The

"the name" of the ſame ſubſiſtence would be twice given; for Πατρος and Πνευματος would in effect imply the ſame.

There would moreover be great impropriety in the expreſſion βαπτιζοντες εις το ονομα τω Αγιω Πνευματος: for, as it is obſerved in Poole, "Eſt *baptizari in aliquem*, vel *in ejus* "*nomen*, ſe ei auctorare atque devovere, et de ejus nomine "appellari velle.—Chriſtiani igitur Tres ſui dogmatis "Auctores agnoſcere jubebantur." Taking then *baptizari in aliquem* or *in nomen ejus* in this ſenſe, it would be a very inaccurate mode of ſpeaking to ſay, we devoted ourſelves to the ſervice of a *holy ſpiritual influence or operation*; yet thus the being baptized εις ονομα Αγιου Πνευματος muſt be interpreted, if the Αγιον Πνευμα be not a real ſubſiſtence.

[3] St. John, xiv. 16, 17.

"Com-

" Comforter, which is the Holy Ghoſt, whom DISC. III.
" the Father will ſend in my name, He ſhall
" teach you all things, and bring all things
" to your remembrance, whatſoever I have
" ſaid unto you[4]." " When He, the Spirit of
" Truth, is come, He will guide you into all
" truth: for He ſhall not ſpeak of Himſelf;
" but whatſoever He ſhall hear, that ſhall He
" ſpeak; and He will ſhew you things to
" come[5]." As theſe expreſſions of our Saviour diſtinctly mark a threefold agency, wherein the " Father[6] ſends," the Son " prays," and the Holy Spirit " comes;" ſo they point out properties which cannot be ſpoken of an attribute, but which evidently denote real ſubſiſtence. The Holy Spirit is to "*ſpeak*," and not "*of Himſelf*," but what He ſhall "*hear*." Now, though it might be ſaid in a figurative manner, that the Father by an attribute may "*teach, ſhew*," and "*guide*," yet to ſay that the Father,

[4] St. John, xiv. 26. [5] St. John, xvi. 13.

[6] See Bp. PEARSON on the Creed. Article 8th, p. 312, where the Perſonality of the HOLY SPIRIT is proved with great force of argument from various texts of Scripture.

though

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though the ſource of ſpiritual inſtruction, "ſhall not ſpeak of Himſelf; but whatſoever "He ſhall *hear*, that ſhall He ſpeak;" would be abſolute contradiction. Diſtinct therefore from the Father muſt be the Holy Spirit; and as He "ſpeaks," whatſoever He "*hears*," the Holy Spirit muſt be a real ſubſiſtence, becauſe *hearing* is one property of real ſubſiſtence. "He ſhall glorify me, "(continues our LORD,) for He ſhall receive "of mine, and ſhall ſhew it unto you. All "things that the Father hath are mine: "therefore ſaid I that He ſhall take of mine, "and ſhall ſhew it unto you[7]." It cannot here be meant that the Father ſhould receive divine illumination and influence from the Son: it is clear therefore that ſome third ſubſiſtence muſt be intended; who can be no other than the "Comforter and the Spirit "of Truth," of whom mention had been made in the words immediately preceding. And thus the perſonality of the Holy Spirit appears.

[7] St. John, xvi. 14, 15.

In

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In the ſtrong language of a man, who writes from the experience of his own ſoul, St. Paul deſcribes the aſſiſtance with which the Holy Spirit helps us to make inward prayer, when, through the preſſure of difficulties and blindneſs of ignorance, our words cannot ſpeak what our hearts conceive: yet, by interceſſion of the Holy Spirit, ſuch prayers are acceptable unto God. "Likewiſe "the Spirit alſo helpeth our infirmities: for "we know not what we ſhould pray for, as "we ought: but the Spirit itſelf maketh "interceſſion for us, with groanings which "cannot be uttered: and He that ſearcheth "the hearts, knoweth what is the mind of "the Spirit, becauſe He, *i. e.* the Spirit, "maketh interceſſion for the ſaints, accord-"ing to the will of God [s]." It is impoſſible to infer from theſe words, that God for pious Chriſtians maketh interceſſion to Himſelf; ſuch inference would be repugnant to common ſenſe: here then is a diſtinction marked out; the Holy Spirit interceding and

[s] Rom. viii. 26, 27.

God

DISC. III. God approving, appear ſeparately and ſeverally under reſpective characters.

One principal object, for which in his writings St. Paul inceſſantly and earneſtly contends, is, to ſupport the doctrine, that under the goſpel diſpenſation Gentiles and Jews were admitted to equal privileges on ſimilar conditions. That to the Epheſians he might prove this aſſertion, he ſets before them the means by which Chriſt had united them in one Church; and, as a happy conſequence of ſuch union, he mentions this bleſſing; "Through Him we both have "acceſs by one Spirit unto the Father[9]." Chriſt who mediates, the Holy Spirit who influences, and the Father, on whoſe mercy and favour all our happineſs muſt depend, are here diſcriminated: for the Apoſtle never can be underſtood as ſaying, that through Chriſt both Jews and Gentiles have acceſs unto God by God, *i. e.* unto God by Himſelf; this would be ſuch a confuſion of language and ideas as could not, without

[9] Eph. ii. 18.

injuſtice,

injuſtice, be imputed to ſo eloquent and learned a writer: the fair conſtruction therefore of this paſſage is to conceive the word "Spirit" as here intimating a real ſubſiſtence diſtinct from the Father. DISC. III.

At the concluſion of his ſecond Epiſtle to the Corinthians, the ſame Apoſtle conveys to them his final benediction in theſe words; "The grace of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and "the love of God, and the communion of the "Holy Ghoſt, be with you all [10]." By every analogy of unconſtrained and unforced interpretation, if in this paſſage real ſubſiſtence be underſtood in one inſtance, it ſhould be admitted in all: for it is not conceivable that St. Paul would confound the faith of his Gentile converts, by a ſudden tranſition from real ſubſiſtence to abſtract quality and mere attribute. It is much more probable, becauſe more conſiſtent with propriety, with the nature of the caſe, and with what he had ſaid in his preceding [11] Epiſtle concerning the Spirit, that the Apoſtle ſhould equally mean to im-

[10] 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

[11] 1 Cor. ii. 10, 13, 14. xii. 4, 8, 9.

preſs

DISC. III. preſs the minds of the Corinthians with the idea of real ſubſiſtence, when he ſpeaks of the Holy Ghoſt, as when he mentions the names of Chriſt and God.

It were eaſy to collect a great variety of other texts, which, in the opinion of the beſt Commentators, tend to confirm the ſame doctrine. But the paſſages already cited are[12] ſufficient for our purpoſe, ſince, by every known rule and eſtabliſhed uſage of expoſition, they can bear but one unequivocal ſenſe, and thence lead but to one concluſion, viz. that real ſubſiſtence is to be underſtood, when, with the Father and the Son, the Holy Ghoſt is mentioned.

From the Holy Ghoſt, as from a real ſubſiſtence, various gifts have been imparted to mankind, under both diſpenſations, Jewiſh and Chriſtian. Of theſe gifts, ſome bring with them more evident, and others more ſecret marks of Divine Energy. Among the moſt ſtriking of the former kind may be

[12] The reader however may conſult Dr. RIDLEY's "Eight Sermons, on the Divinity and Operations of the "Holy Ghoſt."

reckoned

reckoned that inſpiration, which communicated to Moſes a knowledge of paſt events; which enabled him and ſucceeding Prophets to foretel circumſtances that ſhould happen in future times; which directed the Evangeliſts to record the miniſtry of our Saviour; and impowered the Apoſtles to preach the goſpel. DISC. III.

It is ſcarcely poſſible for an attentive reader to contemplate the book of Geneſis, without obſerving and admiring the peculiar *characteriſtics* which diſtinguiſh the Moſaic from all other writings. In accounting for the origin of the World to which we belong, the ſacred Hiſtorian does not perplex us with a confuſed jargon of opinions, multifarious, ſubtile, fanciful, contradictory, and doubtful: in terms [23] direct, and ſuch as become one who is conſcious of truth, with ſublime ſimplicity he affirms, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth [24]." Here we have at once a cauſe

[23] See Preface to "The Sacred and Profane Hiſtory of the World Connected," by Dr. SHUCKFORD, p. lxii.

[24] Gen. i. 1.

DISC. III. adequate to the moſt ſtupendous effects, GOD OMNIPOTENT, who could call into being matter, which before his all-commanding word was pronounced, did not exiſt.—Would we make that moſt intereſting of all inquiries, "Whence came Man?" the ſacred Hiſtorian briefly tells us, "The LORD "GOD formed man of the duſt of the "ground, and breathed into his noſtrils the "breath of life[15]." Would we know whence it proceeds, that notwithſtanding our bodies are thus frail, yet our ſouls are furniſhed with extraordinary powers, which beſpeak a nature diſtinct from matter and ſuperior to it? he informs us, "GOD created man in "his own image[16]." That queſtion, which in a particular manner was agitated by Heathen philoſophers, the queſtion "whence "came evil[17]?" Moſes reſolves in few words; "unto Adam God ſaid, Becauſe "thou haſt hearkened unto the voice of thy "wife, and haſt eaten of the tree of which "I commanded thee, ſaying, 'Thou ſhalt

[15] Gen. ii. 7. [16] Gen. i. 27.
[17] See Maximus Tyrius, Diſſ. xli. ſ. 3.

"not

" not eat of it;' curſed is the ground for DISC.
" thy ſake; in ſorrow ſhalt thou eat of it all III.
" the days of thy life; thorns alſo and
" thiſtles ſhall it bring forth to thee; and
" thou ſhalt eat the herb of the field: in the
" ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread, till
" thou return unto the ground; for out of it
" waſt thou taken; for duſt thou art, and
" unto duſt ſhalt thou return [18]." Hence it appears, that man, perverting the freedom of his will, tranſgreſſed the law of his Maker, and, being corrupted, was from that time doomed to miſery and death. To obviate all conceptions that there can be in the Univerſe [19] two ſelf-exiſtent and independent principles eternally contending for ſuperiority of power, the ſacred hiſtorian ſhews the abſolute dominion of the LORD GOD over the [20] Tempter Satan. In the words of condemnation pronounced on the ſerpent, is

[18] Gen. iii. 17, 18, 19.

[19] See Dr. PRIDEAUX's "Old and New Teſtament "Connected," &c. vol. i. p. 253. part i. b. iii. edit. 1749.

[20] See Bp. SHERLOCK's "Diſſertation 2d, on the Senſe "of the Antients before CHRIST, upon the Circumſtances "and Conſequences of the Fall," p. 213. 215. ed. 1744.

DISC. III. the ſentence of deſtruction that ſhall finally cruſh the malignant efforts, by which this adverſary of man is permitted for a ſeaſon to make trial of our conſtancy in virtue. The origin of that hope, which has prevailed in all ages, that the ſtate of man ſhould be rendered more happy, is intimated in the promiſe made by GOD, that "the ſeed of the "woman ſhould bruiſe the head of the ſer-"pent[21]." The progenitors[22] of mankind found comfort in this aſſurance, and the remembrance of it was never obliterated from the minds of their poſterity. The firſt inſtance of a cuſtom, moſt extraordinary and unaccountable upon any other perſuaſion than that of its having a view to ſome future[23] atonement, the firſt inſtance of ſacri-

[21] Gen. iii. 15.

[22] See Bp. SHERLOCK's Diſcourſe 3d, on the "Uſe and "Intent of Prophecy," p. 64. edit. 1744; and Sermon the 8th of the Bampton Lecture, preached by Dr. White, p. 344. edit. 1ſt.

[23] See Bp. SHERLOCK's Diſc. 3d, p. 73. on Prophecy, and SHUCKFORD, vol. i. p. 84. and Dr. STURGES's Diſc. 7th, p. 124. See alſo Bp. SHERLOCK, vol. iv. Diſc. 2d, p. 75. edit. 1764.

fice

fice is deſcribed by Moſes; and from that deſcription may be inferred the principle which renders ſacrifice moſt acceptable to God. "Cain brought of the fruit of the "ground an offering unto the Lord; and "Abel, he alſo brought of the firſtlings of "his flock[23]:" but they offered not their ſacrifices to equal effect, becauſe not with the ſame diſpoſition of heart. We are warranted by St. Paul in concluding, that Abel appeared before the Lord with humble[24] faith in God's mercy and promiſe of a Redeemer; but that Cain preſumed on his own ſelf-righteouſneſs; hence "the "Lord had reſpect unto Abel and to his "offering; but unto Cain and to his of-"fering, He had not reſpect[25]." DISC. III.

Theſe ſeveral circumſtances, related by the ſacred Hiſtorian, may be called *characteriſtics* of the Moſaic writings; for, although after[26] deep reſearch in the works of heathen authors, we might trace veſ-

[23] Gen. iv. 3, 4. [24] Hebr. xi. 4. [25] Gen. iv. 4, 5.
[26] See CUDWORTH's "Intellectual Syſtem of the Uni-"verſe;" and STILLINGFLEET's "Origines Sacræ."

DISC. III.

tiges of ſome particulars recorded in the book of Geneſis, yet no where ſhall we find all the ſame circumſtances ſo comprehenſively and unequivocally ſtated as by Moſes.

And now it may be aſked, Whence hath this Man ſuch ſuperior knowledge? That he was "learned in all the wiſdom of "the Egyptians[27]," we know of a certainty: but we are warranted in affirming, that with all their pretenſions to ſuperior wiſdom, the Egyptians were abſolute and groſs idolaters, and that they attributed the production of all animated ſubſtance to cauſes[28] abſurd as they are incompetent. From them therefore he could not derive his information reſpecting the unity of Godhead; nor by them could he be taught, that "God created every living creature "that moveth, which the waters bring forth "abundantly; and every winged fowl; the "beaſt of the earth; and every thing that "creepeth upon the earth[29];" doctrine of

[27] Acts vii. 22.

[28] See Diodorus Siculus, B. 1. S. 2 and 7.

[29] Gen. i. 21—25.

this

this nature directly contradicted the Egyptian tenets. DISC. III.

It is indeed poſſible, that Moſes might have received his ſublime knowledge by tradition through ſucceſſive ages from the Creation to his own time. But even then we muſt admit Divine Revelation to have communicated this knowledge in the firſt inſtance; for how, but by means of Divine Revelation, could our original progenitors have known facts antecedent to the exiſtence of themſelves or of the world? Put the caſe then either way, ſtill the ſubſtance of Moſaic Hiſtory reſpecting Creation muſt have originated from Divine Revelation. The only point to be determined is, Whether Moſes received his knowledge by tradition of what was revealed to Adam? or whether his knowledge was by immediate inſpiration communicated to himſelf? Now, if on the one hand it be conſidered, that many ages paſſed between Adam and Moſes; that tradition is always liable to corruption; and that the danger of its being corrupted encreaſes in proportion to

DISC. III. the diſtance of time between the firſt who makes known, and the laſt who relates a fact: if on the other hand it be recollected, that Moſes was the inſtrument by which God wrought a marvellous deliverance for the Iſraelites; that he was endued with power to perform many miracles; that he was enlightened with the ſpirit of prophecy; that the will of God was made known to him from the Deity by ſuch communications as were vouchſafed to no [30] other Prophet from the time of Moſes till the miniſtry of Chriſt; and if to this it be added, that our Lord himſelf appeals unto the Moſaic writings as containing the [31] commandments of God, and, as ſuch, of Divine origin: all theſe circumſtances being duly weighed, there will be juſt reaſon for concluding, that as Moſes wrote the legiſlative parts under Divine influence; ſo alſo he related the hiſtory of Creation, and the facts ſubſequent, under ſimilar inſpiration.

[30] Deut. xxxiv. 10. [31] St. Matth. xv. 3. 6.

But

But not only as a Hiſtorian was Moſes enlightened by the Holy Spirit; as a Prophet alſo he received the gift of inſpiration. He predicts that God would raiſe up to the Jews, from among their brethren, "a "Prophet like unto himſelf [32];" he charges them "to hearken unto that Prophet;" he foretells the calamities which ſhould befall their nation, if they were diſobedient to him [33]. According to his [34] prediction, CHRIST came; and the Jews are at this day ſuffering the evils denounced againſt them, for having [35] rejected Him as the Meſſiah of God. DISC. III.

By the ſame inſpiration ſpake the other Prophets, whoſe volumes are admitted into the body of Scripture, as Sacred Writings. To one of theſe only can we now turn our attention, and remark, among the prophe-

[32] Deut. xviii. 15.

[33] Deut. xviii. 19. and xxviii. 49.

[34] See Bp. SHERLOCK's Diſc. 6th, on Prophecy, p. 165. edit. 1744. and Bp. KIDDER's Demonſtration, Part 1ſt, p. 30.

[35] See Bp. NEWTON's Sixth Diſſertation on the Prophecies.

cies

DISC. III. cies of the *Evangelical* Iſaiah, but one moſt ſingular and ſtriking paſſage. The previous ſufferings, but ſubſequent recompence; the previous humiliation, but ſubſequent glory; the previous death, but ſubſequent immortality and triumph of Chriſt the Meſſiah; how circumſtantially are they deſcribed! in what appropriated characters are they [36] delineated! In the application of prophecies, which in a double ſenſe predict two events, that may happen at periods of time very diſtant from each other, there is a poſſibility of miſtake; but in the prophecy before us, where the ſeveral particulars are confined to one and the ſame perſon, and ſo confined as that with all their ſeeming contrarieties they muſt be accompliſhed in him, or be futile, there can be no poſſibility of [37] miſapplication. In Chriſt then theſe predictions, though containing

[36] See GRAY's "Key to the Old Teſtament," p. 368. ed. 1791.

[37] See Bp. SHERLOCK's Diſcourſe 2d, on Prophecy, p. 35. ed. 1744. and PALEY's "View of the Evidences of Chriſtianity," p. 72. vol. 2. ed. 1795, and Bp. SHERLOCK, vol. 3. Diſc. 10. p. 263. ed. 1764, and Dr. STURGES's Diſc. 7.

facts

facts apparently irreconcileable, were never- DISC. III.
theleſs literally fulfilled; and thus the prophecy and its completion mutually illuſtrate and confirm each other. The prophecy points out the Meſſiah by marks ſo extraordinary, that whoever correſponded with them muſt be that exalted perſon: the completion proves that Iſaiah, who ſo minutely pourtrayed thoſe extraordinary marks, muſt have been enlightened with foreknowledge attainable by no human art; for God in His [28] wiſdom hath ſo far concealed from man the events of future time, that, commonly ſpeaking, we know not "what a day may bring forth [29]:" but at the diſtance of ſeven hundred years did Iſaiah foretell the afflictions which the Meſſiah was to endure for the ſins of mankind, and the reſurrection by which he was moſt fully to confirm his Divine miſſion. Here then

[28] Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginoſâ nocte premit Deus.
Hor. L. 3. O. 29. V. 29.
Τον δὲ μελλοντων τετυφλωνται φρασαὶ.
Pind. Olymp. O. 12. 13.

[29] Prov. xxvii. 1.

is

DISC. III. is a proof indiſputable, that Iſaiah ſpake by inſpiration; a gift, which the Scripture peculiarly attributes to the Holy Spirit; for (in the words of St. Peter) "Prophecy "came not in the old time by the will of "man; but holy men of God ſpake as "they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt [40]."

As it is of great importance to the happineſs of mankind, that the precepts, promiſes, and conditions of that religion which the Son of God came on earth to eſtabliſh, ſhould be delivered down to poſterity by ſome authentic and laſting record; it is reaſonable to conclude, that in mercy and wiſdom God would cauſe to be perpetuated what in mercy and wiſdom He firſt ordained ſhould be revealed. Such record is the Goſpel Hiſtory. In ſtating the *leading* facts and *main* doctrines of Chriſtianity, the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles were directed by divine influence. For this aſſertion we have the authority of our Saviour's promiſe; "the Comforter, which is the Holy "Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my

[40] 2 St. Peter, i. 21.

2 "name,

" name, He ſhall teach you all things, and DISC.
" bring all things to your remembrance, III.
" whatſoever I have ſaid unto you[41]."
" When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come,
" He will guide you into all truth[42]."

Again; as perſons enjoined to preach the Goſpel unto all nations, it was neceſſary that the Apoſtles ſhould know the languages of all nations: ſuch however was the condition of their lives, the period of their ages, and the continual diſtreſſes of perſecution by which they were interrupted and haraſſed, that it was abſolutely impoſſible for them, by any human ſkill, to acquire fluency in ſpeaking the languages of thoſe ſeveral countries, in which Chriſtianity prevailed within forty years after our Saviour's death. How then was Chriſtianity to be propagated by preaching? Behold a moſt powerful energy of the Holy Spirit! The Apoſtles " were all filled with the " Holy Ghoſt, and began to ſpeak with " other tongues, as the Spirit gave them " utterance," inſomuch that " Parthians,

[41] St. John, xiv. 26. [42] St. John, xvi. 13.

" Medes,

DISC. III. "Medes, Elamites, and the dwellers in "Meſopotamia, in Judea, in Cappadocia, "in Pontus, in Aſia properly called [43] Pro- "conſular; in Phrygia and Pamphylia; in "Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about "Cyrene, and ſtrangers of Rome, Jews "and Proſelytes, Cretes and Arabians, "heard the Apoſtles, who were known to "be unlearned Galileans, ſpeak, each people "in their own tongue, the wonderful works "of God [44]." That an event ſo unparalleled ſhould excite aſtoniſhment, might naturally be expected: nor can we be ſurpriſed, that the immediate effect of St. Peter's firſt diſcourſe to the multitude that witneſſed this miracle, ſhould be the converſion of three thouſand ſouls, though in the very midſt of Jeruſalem, where Chriſt had been put to death by the Rulers, not many weeks preceding. The Spirit of the Lord was viſibly operating, and prejudice itſelf was forced into conviction.

The gifts then of inſpiration imparted to Moſes and the Prophets, to the Evangeliſts

[43] See DODDRIDGE. [44] Acts, ii. 4—9, 10, 11.

and

and Apoſtles, bear evident marks of Divine energy: but from the time that Chriſt's religion has been widely diffuſed, the grace of inſpiration has been gentle and ſecret. DISC. III.

That the ſuperiority of human nature over brute animals ariſes from our poſſeſſing mental powers, with which irrational creatures are not endowed, we are all of us abundantly conſcious. That we duly eſtimate theſe diſtinguiſhing faculties cannot be culpable: but in this lies our folly and our fault; through the conceit of vanity and an exceſs of ſelf-eſteem, we too frequently forget that Being, who is the author and giver of all abilities; we forget Him to ſuch a degree, that in nothing do we betray ſo much jealouſy, as leſt too little commendation ſhould be aſcribed to our own attainments, and too much efficiency attributed to the firſt cauſe, that made us what we are. But to every man it may with propriety be ſaid, "What haſt thou, that thou didſt not "receive? and, if thou didſt receive it, why "doſt thou glory as though thou hadſt not "received it"[45]?" If, added to the capacity

[45] 1 Cor. iv. 7.

for

DISC. III. for executing the ordinary purpoſes of life, there exiſt in any man ſuperior powers of creative invention, quick perception, ſubtile diſcrimination, exquiſite taſte, deep reſearch, ſolid judgment; however much the mind that is adorned with theſe faculties may have improved itſelf by application and exerciſe; yet for its original conſtitution, and for the train of circumſtances which have contributed to its information and culture, every man living is in the firſt inſtance indebted to Almighty God!

But if God enables us, in a greater or leſs degree, to attain knowledge and ſkill in concerns of human wiſdom, by *natural* powers, He may [46] enable us to attain knowledge of Himſelf, and underſtanding of religious truths, by *ſpiritual* powers. As, by the light of *reaſon*, He has qualified us for the purpoſes of life in this preſent ſtate of things; ſo, by the additional light of *revelation*, He may direct us to prepare for ex-

[46] "Can it be a queſtion, whether we may not be ſe-"cretly guided by an Omnipotent and Spiritual Director?" ſays Dr. POWELL, with his uſual good ſenſe and ſound judgment. See his 13th Diſcourſe, p. 216—220. ed. 1776.

iſtence

iſtence in a future ſtate: and as by preſerving the faculties of our bodies and minds in perfect ſanity, He gives us *natural* ſtrength for the diſcharge of worldly affairs, ſo by continuing His influence on our paſſions and affections, He may ſupply us with *ſpiritual* ſtrength for the fulfilling of thoſe duties, that have God and Holineſs for their ſole objects! It muſt be allowed that God has *power* to impart as much, or as little, of divine help to our minds, as He may judge proper. But if it be *poſſible* for God to do this, let us ſee if it be *probable* that He ſhould thus act. Now confeſſedly the *rational* part of creation is more noble than the *irrational;* and the *rational* ſoul in man is more excellent than the *material* body, which, when devoid of the ſoul, has no reaſon. We ſee, feel, and acknowledge that God exerciſes his providence for the *irrational* parts of the creation, and for the *material* body of man: but according to every idea we can form of Divine wiſdom, it is juſt to conclude that DISC. III.

DISC. III. God ſhould have greater regard for the *nobler*[47] than for the *inferior* works of his hands, greater regard for the ſouls than for the bodies of men: and upon the ſame principle it is juſt to conclude, that if man be deſtined for immortality, God ſhould rather provide for his well-being through a ſtate of eternity, than for his exiſtence in a condition merely tranſient. Allowing then that God doth exerciſe a providence; that there are in the world rational and irrational parts; and that rational powers are more noble than material ſubſtance; allowing theſe points (which ſcarcely any one will deny) we may preſume it is not only *poſſible*, but *moſt probable*, that God ſhould aſſiſt the mind of man by divine influence[48], in order to direct and conduct him

[47] See Dr. STURGES's 9th Sermon, p. 159. ed. 1792.

[48] Not *compelling*, but *perſuading*; for of this nature is the whole of the Chriſtian diſpenſation, according to the following very judicious remarks of Chryſoſtom on the calling of St. Paul, and on the divers methods adopted by Divine wiſdom for the reforming of man:

him to his ultimate and conſummate happineſs. DISC. III.

The deductions of reaſon, on this ſubject, are confirmed by the general repreſentations of Holy Scripture.

That man by nature is ſinful in his diſpoſition, weak in his powers to reſiſt temptation, blind in his diſcernment of religious truths, and of himſelf inſufficient either to think ſo rightly, or act ſo piouſly, as becomes a ſervant of God moſt Holy; from the teſtimony of antiquity profane[49] and ſacred, concurring with the experience of our own hearts and

Συ δε ακων ταυτα, μη αναγκας την κλησιν ειναι νομιζε, ουδε γαρ αναγκαζει ὁ Θεος· αλλ' αφησι κυριως ειναι προαιρεσεων και μετα κλησιν. CHRYSOSTOM, vol. vii. p. 592. A. ed. Paris, 1616.

Επειδαν γαρ ἑκοντας ειναι θελεται καλης, αλλ' ουκ αναγκη και βιᾳ, εδειξεν αυτῳ και μεθοδῳ· ου δια το αυτος αδυνατος, απαγε· αλλα δια το ασθενες το ημετερον. Αυτῳ μεν γαρ ἑξεστι νευσαι μονον, μαλλον δε ἐθελησαι μονον, και ποιησαι παντα ὁπερ αν βουληται· ἡμεις δε ὁπαξ ἑαυτων γενομενοι κυριοι, ουκ ανεχομεθα παντα ὑπακουειν αυτῳ· Εαν ουν ακοντας ελκυσῃ, ὁπερ εδωκεν αφαιρησεται, την της ἑξουσιας λεγω ἐλευθεριαν. P. 605. D.

[49] Peccavimus omnes; alii gravia, alii leviora, alii ex deſtinato, alii forte impulſi, aut alienâ nequitiâ ablati: alii

DISC. III. and conduct, and with obſervation of life and manners prevailing in the world, we learn to a demonſtration poſitive and certain. If then we become ſo regenerate, as that our appetite for vice ſhould be changed into a love of virtue; our frailty be ſtrengthened by firm reſolution; our ignorance of Chriſtianity be converted into real faith of the heart, that Chriſt by his death is the Author of our ſalvation; and if our ſouls, being animated with good deſires, ſhould perſevere in performing good actions; here are effects, which nothing in mere nature is competent to produce. Reaſon, therefore, bids us look to ſome higher cauſe, and

in bonis conſiliis parùm fortitèr ſtetimus, et innocentiam inviti ac renitentes perdidimus.

SENECÆ de Clementia, lib. i. f. 6. ed. 1613.

Inter cætera mortalitatis incommoda, et hæc eſt caligo mentium; nec tantum neceſſitas errandi, ſed errorum amor.

SEN. de Ira, l. ii. f. 9.

Quis eſt iſte, qui ſe profitetur omnibus legibus innocentem? SEN. de Ira, l. ii. f. 27.

See alſo p. 172. of Dr. RIDLEY's Eight Sermons, ed. 1742.

Scripture

Scripture points out to us the true ſource of our renovation. Did converts from heathenism in the primitive age of Chriſtianity ceaſe to be "fooliſh, diſobedient, deceived, ſerving "divers luſts and pleaſures, living in malice "and envy, hateful, and hating one an-"other[50]?" This change of their hearts St. Paul attributes to "the renewing of the "Holy Ghoſt[51]." DISC. III.

[50] Tit. iii. 3. "*We ourſelves* (ſays St. Paul) were "fooliſh," &c. Whether the apoſtle is in theſe words, to be underſtood literally, as having himſelf been ſubject, before his converſion, to ſome of the vices here reprobated; or whether he means only with his uſual addreſs to ſoften the diſpleaſure of the Gentile converts, and therefore on himſelf, as well as on them, paſſes this general cenſure; in either caſe we may collect from this paſſage as from 1 Cor. vi. 11. Eph. ii. 3. Col. iii. 7. Rom. v. 19—32. what *probably* would have been our moral condition had not our country been bleſſed with a knowledge of the goſpel: for there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe the morals of heathen Britain would have been more pure and perfect, than thoſe of heathen Greece, or heathen Rome. Is not then the Goſpel "a pearl of great price?" And ſhould we not moſt anxiouſly take heed, leſt "the "light that is in us become darkneſs?" leſt we change Chriſtianity for a ſyſtem of groſs ignorance, and its uſual attendant, groſs vice!

[51] Tit. iii. 5.

DISC. III. And if it be our happy condition, to have abandoned our vices, reſigned our prejudices, conquered our paſſions, embraced the Goſpel, followed its precepts, relied on its promiſes, and prayed moſt earneſtly for ſtrength to perſevere in the ſpiritual courſe we may have begun; if ſuch be our happy condition, let us be neither aſhamed, nor afraid to confeſs the truth, that we owe it, and ſhould be thankful for it to the ſame HOLY SPIRIT, by whoſe influence our minds are enlightened to diſcern, encouraged to purſue, and aſſiſted to perform moral and religious duties. And that ſuch may ever be our happy condition, let us pour forth our ſupplications and "bow our knees unto the FATHER "of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, that He "would grant us, according to the riches "of His grace, to be ſtrengthened with "might by his SPIRIT, in the inner "man; that CHRIST may dwell in our "hearts [32]."

[32] Eph. iii. 14. 16, 17.

Now

Now to that SPIRIT, which in nature is divine, in greatneſs incomprehenſible, in operations powerful, in bleſſings[53] good; be aſcribed, in Unity of Godhead with the FATHER and the SON, all honour, might, majeſty, and dominion, for evermore. Amen! DISC. III.

[53] Το μεν θειον τη φυσει, το αχωρητον τη μεγεθει, το δυνατον, εν ταις ενεργειαις, το αγαθον εν ταις ενεργειαις, μη υπερυψωσομεν μη δοξασομεν; BASIL; quoted by Dr. RIDLEY, p. 16.

Πνευμα τι το προφητικον σεβομεθα και προσκυνουμεν, λογῳ και αληθειᾳ τιμωντες.

JUST. MARTIN; quoted by Dr. RIDLEY, p. 17.

DISCOURSE IV.

On the different Sentiments which are entertained at different Periods of our Age.

1 COR. xiii. 11.

When I was a Child, I ſpake as a Child, I underſtood as a Child, I thought as a Child; but when I became a Man, I put away childiſh Things[1].

DISC. IV.

THE immediate deſign of the Apoſtle in the uſe of theſe expreſſions, was by an apt ſimilitude forcibly to repreſent, that whatever might be his knowledge of the Chriſtian diſpenſation during the preſent

[1] Among the "Diſcourſes on various Subjects," by Dr. POWELL, there is an excellent one on this text.

confined

confined ſtate of his intellectual faculties, yet, comparatively ſpeaking, it was but little better than mere ignorance, when contraſted with that more clear and more perfect underſtanding of Divine truths, which would enlighten his mind when its powers were more enlarged in a future life, the concerns of which would be altogether ſpiritual. But the words may be taken by us in a literal as well as a figurative ſenſe; and we may firſt apply them to the purpoſe of remarking the different[2] conceptions of the ſame objects, which men of ſerious reflection entertain at different periods of their age. DISC. IV.

The law, which regulates and pervades this ſyſtem of the univerſe, to which we belong, is that nothing connected with it ſhould be at once[3] perfect. Accordingly we ſee that mature improvement is the

[2] The Spaniſh Proverb ſays, *a wiſe man changes his mind, a fool never will.* SPECTAT. No. 78.

[3] See Bp. BUTLER's Analogy, Part ii. ch. iv. p. 281, 282. edit. 6th.

reſult

DISC. IV. result of progreſſive[4] advances, carried on from beginnings commonly ſlight and inconſiderable, and purſued to the utmoſt extent of refinement, which the condition of things now exiſting, and the peculiar qualities of the object to be improved, are capable of admitting. In the works of Divine Creation, as in thoſe of human art, the force of this law is equally obſervable. Whether we look to the inanimate or animate parts of the globe, we ſhall find this decree operating with uniform influence[5]. Before we can gather the full ear of corn, we muſt patiently wait to ſee firſt the tender blade, and then the more firm

[4] Omnium enim rerum principia parva ſunt; ſed ſuis progreſſionibus uſa augentur: nec ſine cauſâ: in primo enim ortu ineſt teneritas et mollities quædam, ut nec res videre optumas nec agere poſſint: virtutis enim beatæque vitæ (quæ duo maxumè expetenda ſunt) ſerius lumen adparet. Multo etiam ſerius ut planè, qualia ſint, intelligantur. Cic. de Finibus, l. v. 21.

[5] It is plainly *not* the method of nature, in other parts of the creation, to obtain her ends *inſtantaneouſly*. See "Divine Benevolence aſſerted," by Dr. Balguy, p. 71.

ſtalk,

ſtalk[6]. Before we can pluck the fruit of a tree, the tender plant muſt be converted into a robuſt trunk. For every ſpecies of animal exiſtence, whether in the air, the earth, or the waters, a ſimilar progreſſion from the imbecillity of firſt production to the comparative ſtrength of full growth, is univerſally ordained. The earth itſelf performs its revolutions, not ſo as that every part ſhould at once have broad noon; but that dawn of light, and morn ſhould precede the mid-day. Let theſe illuſtrations be now applied to man. As in his body[7], ſo

DISC. IV.

[6] In the firſt period of life, children are not capable of diſtinguiſhing right from wrong in human conduct; neither are they capable of abſtract reaſoning in matters of ſcience. Their judgment of moral conduct, as well as their judgment of truth, advances by inſenſible degrees, like the corn and the graſs.

We may obſerve a ſimilar progreſs in the faculties of the mind: for there is a wonderful analogy among all the works of God, from the leaſt even to the greateſt.

Dr. REID on the "Active Powers of Man," Eſſ. 3. c. viii. p. 253. ed. 1788.

[7] Natura igitur corpus quidem hominis ſic et genuit et formavit, ut alia in primo ortu perficeret, alia progrediente ætate fingeret.

Animum

DISC. IV. so in his intellect, he arrives at maturity by succeſſive progreſs. In his youth, the ſenſes, the memory, the imagination, are the characteriſtic faculties. At the earlieſt period of manhood, reflection on what the ſenſes have imparted, the memory retained, and the imagination conceived, begins to operate. Habits of reflection lead on to judgment; and judgment, as the effect which ultimately proceeds from the due exerciſe of abilities antecedently acquired, directs man to form his opinions on ſubjects important to his happineſs: ſuch are, pleaſurable amuſements; condition of life; the actions of all perſons with whom he is more immediately connected; the civil polity, by which his perſon, his freedom, and his property are to be ſecured; and the truths of that religion which claims obſervance, as being the revelation of God's

Animum autem reliquis rebus ita perfecit ut corpus.—Quod autem in homine præſtantiſſimum atque optumum eſt, id deſeruit, etſi dedit talem mentem quæ omnem virtutem jam accipere poſſet—ſed virtutem ipſam inchoavit: nihil amplius. Cic. de Fin. l. v. 21.

will

will to man. Whatever has reference to either of theſe concerns, moſt commonly engages, and indeed moſt juſtly demands his attention. DISC. IV.

In his conceptions then of the manner in which his leiſure hours may be ſpent agreeably; of condition in life; of conduct in individuals; of civil inſtitutions; and of Chriſtian doctrines; it is probable he will experience conſiderable changes through the progreſs of his age: and this, not from any inſtability of mind; but from having taken a more enlarged view of all ſubjects that have occurred to his thoughts; from more thorough acquaintance with all circumſtances; from more extenſive information, deeper reflection, greater ſtrength for concluſive reaſoning, and firmer grounds for ſolid judgment [8].

In nothing does the opinion of mature age more widely differ from that of youth, than with reſpect to the purſuits of pleaſurable amuſement. In the ardour of early

[8] Ἡ γαρ των λογων κρισις, πολλης ἐστι πειρας τελευταιον ἐπιγεννημα. ſays Longinus (ſect. 6.). He might with equal truth have added καὶ των πραξεων.

days,

DISC. IV. days, the mind ſeeks with avidity every object that is new, every ſcene that is animating, every engagement that can call into action the bodily powers: and whatever is not recommended by novelty, whatever requires repoſe, or demands the application of intellect, appears then to be dull, inſipid, and unintereſting. But follow the ſame mind to that time of life, when the habits either of profeſſional learning, or of active employment, operate with the ſtrongeſt force. To the man of letters diſengaged from weightier concerns, either the works of imagination, or ſober reflection, or ſocial converſe, amidſt the calm ſerenity of undiſturbed quiet, afford the moſt exquiſite delight[9]: and the man of buſineſs finds his

[9] Neither ignorant of life, nor moroſe in diſpoſition was that accompliſhed moral Poet, who hath expreſſed the change of his mind from a love of lighter pleaſures to a reliſh for others of a graver caſt, in theſe different paſſages:

O rus! quando ego te aſpiciam! quandoque licebit
Nunc veterum libris, nunc ſomno, et inertibus horis
Ducere ſollicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ!

Hor. 2 Sat. vi. 60.

Ergo

his greateſt relief in rural retirement and domeſtic comfort. To each of them his own ſimple method of recreation is much more ſatisfactory, than many of the modes by which intervals of leiſure are often filled up, at the expence of inconvenient trouble and perhaps injured health to thoſe, DISC. IV.

Ergo ubi me in montes et in arcem ex urbe removi,
Quid prius illuſtrem ſatyris, muſâque pedeſtri?
2 Sat. vi. 16.

Non eadem eſt ætas; non mens. 1 Epiſt. i. 4.

Nimirum ſapere eſt abjectis utile nugis,
Et tempeſtivum pueris concedere ludum:
Ac non verba ſequi fidibus modulanda Latinis,
Sed veræ numeroſque modoſque ediſcere vitæ.
2 Ep. ii. 141.

See alſo 1 Sat. vi. 104.—1 Epiſt. vii. 35.—1 Epiſt. x. 8. 1 Epiſt. xiv. 16. Yet however much he preferred his own purſuits, he cenſures not thoſe of another, unleſs immoral or out of character; but with his uſual good humour gives this advice;

Nec tua laudabis ſtudia; aut aliena reprêndes.
1 Epiſt. xviii. 39.

allowing no one to indulge himſelf in that conceit and ſpleen, againſt which men of retired habits ſhould particularly guard themſelves.

whom

DISC. IV. whom the ſtrength and ſprightlineſs of youth have forſaken.

The conceptions of young minds are generally erroneous, in miſtaking the cauſes from which the happineſs of external condition ariſes. Captivated by the parade, and beguiled by the eaſe of opulence, they conclude theſe to be the ſources of felicity; and therefore annex ideas of ſupreme enjoyment to the high rank in which opulence abounds. And judging only from the labour and frugality incident to other claſſes, they form an opinion, that even the middle order of ſociety muſt be leſs happy than the higher. But a more true eſtimate of wealth and ſituation leads us to more juſt concluſions. High rank hath indeed the *means* of unſpeakable happineſs; for it hath power to do good, ſuperfluity to relieve the diſtreſſed, opportunity for enjoying rational pleaſures, and what is of no ſmall value, ability to be independent. If however to the poſſeſſor of theſe *means*, there be wanting a *mind* capable of applying them

to purpoſes, that will promote the ends for which affluence ſhould ſerve, purpoſes from which alone can ariſe mental ſatisfaction; in that caſe rank and its glittering appendages add nothing to human happineſs. Much leſs does exemption from uſeful employment tend to that effect. Wearineſs and diſguſt not unfrequently obtrude themſelves on him, who wants occupation [11] either of body or mind. On the contrary, a cheerful and contented diſpoſition is uſually found in thoſe, who divide their time between reſt and labour. Commonly ſpeaking then, it is not ſo much from the condition itſelf, as from the *right uſe of it* that happineſs ariſes to high rank. And upon a general view of the middle, compared with higher ranks, perhaps it may be truly ſaid, that where in the middle rank there is competency the fruit of induſtry, and where the heart

DISC. IV.

[11] Surgit amari aliquid, quod in ipſis floribus angat,
Aut quòd conſcius ipſe animus ſe fortè remordet
Deſidioſè ætatem agere. LUCR.

See CICERO de Finibus, l. 5. ſ. 20, 21.

See Dr. BALGUY's "Divine Benevolence aſſerted." p. 36.

DISC. IV. is right to God and man, pure from evil intention towards any perſon exiſting, erect above mean and abject thoughts, and ready to perform kind offices on all occaſions; in that caſe, there is little, if any diſparity with reſpect to real ſatisfaction, on the ſide of exalted ſtation.

Of actions palpably vicious and diſhoneſt, a mind not corrupt will uniformly retain the ſame opinion. Whatever in itſelf is morally bad, muſt ſtand condemned by us at every age of our life, if our paſſions have not groſsly perverted our reaſon, and if we ourſelves are not depraved. It is not then of caſes notoriouſly wicked that we are now ſpeaking: of them there can be in us no diverſity of ſentiment. But the common occurrences of every day preſent to our obſervation an infinitude of actions, which, if taken abſtractedly and without reference to any other circumſtances, are of a nature indifferent; and the rectitude, or impropriety of them, depends entirely on various conſiderations to be regarded in the perſon who acts. The occaſion, in its full extent, to which he

he muſt ſuit his meaſures; the princi- DISC. IV.
ples from which his purpoſe originated; the views with which he adopted this or that manner of forwarding his deſign; the means with which he was furniſhed for executing it; the difficulties with which he had to contend in his progreſs; the particular obligations of duty which either his ſtation, or age, or profeſſion, might require of him; and perhaps many other minute points, which, however immaterial they might appear to curſory obſervers, may nevertheleſs be of great moment to the party immediately concerned; all theſe particulars muſt be taken into the account as the probable grounds on which his conduct was directed, before we can pronounce the common actions of any one near us to be either praiſe-worthy or blameable [12]. But in the ſeaſon of ardour and inexperience, we are

[12] Παν πραγμα δυο εχει λαβας; "Audi alteram partem;" "There are two ſides to every queſtion;" are proverbial ſayings, replete with good ſenſe, and founded on accurate obſervation and practical knowledge of human concerns.

DISC. IV. are prejudiced by firſt views: and alike impatient and incapable of making inquiry into the intrinſic merits or demerits of what we perceive done, both in affairs of moment and in common behaviour we often cenſure what deſerves commendation, and as often applaud what ſhould rather be reprehended. Thus, eager to purſue our own inclinations, and incompetent to eſtimate the bleſſings of education, we are not much diſpoſed [22] to regard with affection thoſe who either check our vicious tendencies, or who enforce diligence in the acquiſition of learning: the greater portion of our favour is beſtowed on others, who ſuffer us to perſiſt in follies, without admonition, and to miſapply our time and talents, without reproof. Diſcerning not the bounds, which ſeparate liberality from profuſion, to the ſquanderings of the pro-

concerns. And happy is it both for themſelves and the community, when the tempers of men incline them to ſeize the right handle; to hear the better part; and acquieſce in the more favourable ſide.

[22] The expreſſions of Horace, "Monitoribus aſper"—"Prodigus æris," A. P. 163, 4: and of Ariſtotle, ὀξυθυμοι—ευελπιδες——φιλογελωτες—ευτραπελοι. Rhet. 2. 12. ed. Oxf. are here illuſtrated.

digal

digal we give the name of generoſity, and deem the bounties of the prudent no marks of beneficence. Alive to reſentment, and haſty for revenge, we annex the idea of heroiſm to implacability, and impute forgiveneſs of injuries to want of ſpirit. If we can bring ourſelves to ſomewhat like reconciliation, yet as we are neither habituated to the governing of our anger, nor enlarged in our knowledge and views of things, we ſuffer trifles to renew our animoſity [13], and think the ſame irritability laudable in others. Little converſant with affairs of the world, and as yet untaught that every end requires correſponding means conducive to it; that ſuch means it is not always in our power to command; that the ſame object wears not to all perſons alike the ſame appearance; that on many occaſions the prejudices, the tempers, the humours of others muſt be conſulted, and ſuitable opportunities for making impreſſions on their minds be attentively obſerved and ſeaſon-

DISC. IV.

[13] Seu calidus ſanguis, ſeu rerum inſcitia vexat
Indomitâ cervice feros. HOR. 1 Epiſt. iii. 33.

DISC. IV.

ably embraced; untaught in this complication of human concerns, which uſually retards diſpatch, and frequently creates invincible impediment to the accompliſhing of our wiſhes; through ſelf-confidence and ſanguine hope we are aſſured ſucceſs would have attended us, where perſons more judicious have either abandoned the undertaking, or have experienced an unfavourable event. In the love of truth being ourſelves ingenuous, but in our manner of ſhewing it often intemperate, the rude and uncivil we call open and ſincere, and miſtake diſguſting ſourneſs for plain honeſty. Though we are prone to treat with ridicule the foibles of others, yet we are provoked by retaliation, as if it were an inſult; for, through want of ſelf-inſpection we are ignorant of ourſelves, and we forget that he who retorts was not the aggreſſor.

Such then being ſome of the miſconceptions, under which with regard to the actions of other men we frequently labour in the days of our youth, let us now conſider the effect which advancing years very commonly produce on our judgment.

Obſerving

Obſerving that inordinate indulgence of appetite is deſtructive to health, to underſtanding, to reputation; and finding that proficiency in no art or ſcience can be attained but by efforts of induſtrious application, we recall to our memories, and reſpect as our beſt friends, thoſe who curbed our paſſions, when they required the ſtrongeſt[14] check; and who impelled[15] us to aſſiduity in cultivating our abilities. Circumſcribed as many are by the limits of mediocrity in temporal poſſeſſions, and unavoidably obliged as all are to adapt their expences to the meaſure of their property, we are ſenſible that frugality is the foundation of generoſity; and that

DISC. IV.

[14] *Αταμιευτου γαρ των ἡδονων ἡ ακμη, και σκιρτητικον, και χαλινου δεομενον· ὡσθ' οἱ μη της ἡλικιας ταυτης ἐῤῥωμενως αντιλαμβανομενοι, τῃ διανοιᾳ διδοντες εξουσιαν επι τα αδικηματα λανθανουσι.* PLUTARCH, de Educatione Liberorum.

[15] Let the Author of theſe Diſcourſes in one inſtance be allowed to ſpeak of himſelf. Here then he cannot omit to expreſs his gratitude for the encouragement he received from Rev. JAMES MAPLETON and Rev. BENJAMIN WEBB, his Maſters in Grammar, at ODIHAM, HANTS; and from Rev. Dr. JOSEPH WARTON, and Rev. THOMAS COLLINS, in his higher purſuits of Literature, at WINCHESTER COLLEGE.

DISC. IV. frequently the giver of a ſmall donation is more truly liberal, than he who without thought and without inconvenience more largely contributes. From having felt the inquietude of mind and diſorder of the reaſoning faculties, which anger has occaſioned in our own boſoms; from having noticed the extravagant and abſurd acts, by which perſons reſentful degrade themſelves in the eſtimation of the more moderate; from having found it a work infinitely more difficult, and therefore more manly to govern, rather than obey the impetuoſity of our temper; from having diſcovered that a diſpoſition unknowing[16] how to relent is odious in a ſociety of civilized manners, and ſuitable to none but a ſavage barbarian; from a ſenſe too, that we ourſelves often need forgiveneſs, but that pardon we cannot expect, if none we grant; from all theſe conſiderations we love the perſon, who with patience will endure provocations,

[16] ——— Αϊδης τοι αμειλιχος, ηδ' αδαμαστος·
Τουνεκα και τε βροτοισι θεων εχθιστος ἁπαντων.
Il. ix. v. 158.

See alſo v. 592, &c. and the fine allegory in the ſame book.

and

and on eaſy terms will conſent to recon- DISC.
ciliation. When obſtacles in the way of IV.
ſome deſirable end have frequently impeded the career, in which we fancied we could proceed without difficulty or hindrance; and when we have been taught that others, no leſs than ourſelves, are tenacious of ſome preconceived opinions, influenced by ſome habitual diſpoſition, and fluctuating in their inclination; we are then convinced that however excellent and adviſable a meaſure might be in itſelf, yet frequently it is not practicable, and therefore muſt be relinquiſhed, from a cauſe which neither wiſdom nor zeal can control, the neceſſity of the caſe. If we have learnt it not from reflection creditable to our underſtanding, we ſhall at leaſt have been made to know it from the reſentment we have provoked, that truth and frankneſs, if they mean to be uſeful, muſt in their application be diſcreet, and in their language delicate. Self-knowledge will at laſt have taught us, that we need not look beyond ourſelves to find inſtances of folly; and that unleſs

DISC. IV. leſs we would bring on ourſelves and hear with unconcern, reproach from others, we muſt forbear taking the unwarrantable liberty of ridiculing them. And thus having been ourſelves placed under a greater variety of circumſtances, and having attended to the modes of acting which in a diverſity of caſes we have been compelled by thoſe circumſtances to adopt; having moreover learnt that men in general, conſtituted as they are of paſſions the ſame in kind, though different in degree, do in ſimilar ſituations act nearly on ſimilar principles; we are commonly diſpoſed to judge with candour and to pronounce condemnation on no man, till we have heard the reaſons of his conduct fully explained, and the grounds of ſuch reaſons impartially diſcloſed [17].

As

[17] Changing but the terms, we may adopt for judging of moral conduct the critic's rule for examining poetry and painting:

—— Know well each ancient's proper character,
His fable, ſubject, ſcope, in every page,
Religion, country, genius of his age.

POPE's Eſſ. I. on Criticiſm, v. 119.

Some

As thus we change our ſentiments on the actions of individuals, we correct them no leſs on concerns of civil polity. For, we apply the ſame candour in judging of public as of private meaſures; and conceive that were the motives for ſuch meaſures underſtood, the authors of them would be juſtified. In our earlier years we are totally unacquainted with the "ſecret lets and difficulties, which in "public proceedings are innumerable and

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Some figures monſtrous and miſhap'd appear,
Conſider'd ſingly, or beheld too near;
Which but proportion'd to their light and place
Due diſtance reconciles to form and grace.
POPE's Eſſ. I. on Criticiſm, 171.

According to this remark of a maſter critic,

Ut pictura poeſis erit; quæ, ſi propiùs ſtes,
Te capiet magis; et quædam, ſi longiùs abſtes.
HOR. A. P. v. 361.

See in JUNIUS's "CATALOGUS," &c. p. 153. what is related concerning two ſtatues of Minerva, produced the one by Alcamenes, the other by Phidias.

The inference to be drawn from all this is, that moral actions, like works of art, muſt be viewed each in its proper light, with all concomitant circumſtances and intention propoſed, taken into conſideration.

"inevi-

DISC. IV. " inevitable [18]:" but when obſervation of facts hath made us ſenſible, how arduous a taſk it is to ſecure obedience to the laws, in a ſyſtem which combines different and oppoſite principles, and which, though it ſupports order, yet ſubjects every individual to the leaſt reſtraint that can poſſibly be laid on him conſiſtently with the ends and purpoſes of civil ſociety; when experience hath taught us this knowledge, we do not haſtily and for ſlight imperfections " go about to perſuade the mul-" titude, that they are not ſo well governed " as they ought to be [19]."

Let us now conſider the influence of mature age on ſome opinions of a religious nature.

At that period when they firſt begin to think of religion, many, forming their judgment from the ſimplicity of Chriſtian Elements, are led to conceive, that for the underſtanding of the Sacred Writings no-

[18] HOOKER's Eccleſiaſtical Polity, B. i. ſ. 1.
[19] HOOKER, ibid.

thing

thing more is neceſſary, than the knowledge of words in the Hebrew and Greek tongues. They have it yet to diſcover, that if they would learn to interpret the whole body of Scripture, by which Chriſtian Elements are introduced, eſtabliſhed, and illuſtrated, they muſt become acquainted with particulars various in kind, and wide in comprehenſion. The idiomatic phraſeology of the languages in which the Scriptures are written; the object of Types and application of Anti-Types; the views and completion of Prophecies; the ſcope and connexion of the Old and New Teſtament; the manners, cuſtoms, opinions, times, and places, to which alluſion is reſpectively made in the ſeveral paſſages to be explained; all theſe circumſtances demand conſideration, before a complete and faithful expoſition can be given: added to which muſt be a readineſs in comparing texts that are to be collated, and ability in thence drawing a juſt concluſion. He who is content with haſtily and ſuperficially peruſing the *words* only of Scripture, will long

DISC. IV.

DISC. IV. long remain ignorant of the many qualifications requiſite for the forming of a biblical ſcholar, and muſt be incompetent to the work of interpretation. But when the mind hath begun to inveſtigate the *ſenſe* of Scripture, it then perceives its inability to make any effectual progreſs without continual reference to thoſe rules of criticiſm [20], which are ſuitable to the ſtyle and genius of Holy Writ, and without the concurrent aid of philology in all its branches. Experience of this nature creates in us reluctance either to propoſe, or adopt novel opinions concerning firſt principles in religion; and renders us properly cautious how we reject interpretations given by men, who were known to have devoted their time and talents for many ſucceſſive years, to the ſole employ-

[20] Such for inſtance as thoſe contained in the "Philologiæ Sacræ Libri Quinque," of GLASSIUS.

See alſo Dr. MACKNIGHT's Eſſay, "Of the right Interpretation of Scripture," in his, "New Literal Tranſlation of all the Apoſtolical Epiſtles," vol. iv. p. 383. with the original text.

ment of examining and illuſtrating the Scriptures. DISC. IV.

Again; to the ſtudy of the Scriptures others come, bringing with them indeed ſerious attention; but through that intellectual preſumption, which attends inexperience, they bring alſo a diſpoſition to adopt no doctrine, which is not perfectly within the comprehenſion of their own reaſon. Long reflection however teaches us that Revelation profeſſes to communicate more than reaſon could have made known to us; and that God and his ways, which are the ſubjects of Revelation, are far above the capacity of man. Man is finite, God infinite in underſtanding. Man ſees but ſome few years; the ſight of God extends through eternity. Man can argue only on human principles; God may have counſels and motives for acting, not indeed irreconcileable, but impenetrable to human wiſdom. Man is limited in all his powers; but God can do all things which imply not contradiction. Man can give but little account of his own nature

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ture[21]: the nature of Divine Eſſence he is utterly incapable of comprehending. From not having obſerved that the compaſs of reaſon cannot be enlarged beyond a certain point; and from not having conſidered the ineffable diſparity between God and man, between things Divine and human; many at their firſt application to the ſtudy of the Goſpel have received the doctrines of atonement and of the Trinity, with degrees of doubt, becauſe they could not underſtand how Divine Juſtice could be ſatisfied with the death of an innocent perſon; or how the ſame eſſence could be ſo communicated, as that the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit ſhould be but One. Patient inveſtigation, however, at length teaches them, that it is not required of them to underſtand *how*[22] theſe things can be. God reveals

[21] See Dr. REID on the "Intellectual Powers of Man," Eſſay 2. c. i. p. 75.

[22] Since then to comprehend the reaſon and nature of things, is neither neceſſary to our believing the reality of

reveals the facts, and therefore they cannot but be true. And repeated experience that we believe moſt firmly many other facts, for which however we cannot account, convinces us that it is entirely conſiſtent with reaſon to believe the Goſpel doctrines, though by man inexplicable. Thus; that the world exiſts, we have ocular demonſtration; and that God created it, we can prove to moral certainty; but *how* his Almighty Word could call into exiſtence things which before had no being; *why* He formed the world after the manner we now behold it, or *why* He formed it at all; theſe are queſtions which cannot be explained, nor indeed are ever aſked by ſound reaſoners. With reſpect to the doctrines of atonement and the Trinity, the caſe is ſimilar. That theſe doctrines DISC. IV.

of them, nor yet to our receiving benefit and advantage from them; how comes it to be neceſſary that in religion there ſhould be nothing that we do not underſtand?

Bp. SHERLOCK's Diſc. i. vol. i. p. 61. edit. 5th; and Diſc. iii. vol. iv. p. 103, 104.

DISC. IV. exiſt in the Goſpel, we are perſuaded by the interpretation of many paſſages to that effect. We believe that He, who delivered thoſe doctrines, ſpake what in his ſuperior Wiſdom He knew to be true; the doctrines themſelves, therefore, we admit on that account; but *how* or *why* the death of Chriſt is thus efficacious; or *how* the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are united in one Godhead, are queſtions we do not pretend or think it neceſſary to ſolve, becauſe Revelation hath not explained them, nor hath God required of us ſuch knowledge [23].

It is one part of wiſdom to be ſenſible of our ignorance; and one mark of courage not to fear confeſſing that of ſome things we are ignorant. In the pride of youth, we neither feel that our underſtanding is limited; nor, if we did feel it, would jealouſy, leſt our abilities ſhould be depreciated, permit us to acknowledge any imperfection of that nature, even though it be unavoid-

[23] See Dr. STURGES's Diſcourſe 5, p. 84.

able.

able. When, however, our reſearches have often been obſtructed by utter impoſſibility to unfold primary cauſes; and when we have learnt to think it more puſillanimous to pretend having powers which man cannot poſſeſs, than freely to own that with many particulars of an abſtruſe kind we are unacquainted; we heſitate not to reply, "*we do not know*[24], when the reaſons which made the death of Chriſt a condition of mercy towards man, and when the eſſential nature of Deity are aſked[25] of us. To God's infinite Wiſdom and unerring Word we refer all ſuch difficulties: under conviction of the one and ſanction of the other, we reſign our former prejudices; and believe the doctrines revealed unto mankind aſſuredly for no other purpoſe, than to increaſe their happineſs by improving their morals and their religious knowledge. DISC. IV.

[24] See Dr. STURGES's Diſc. 7, p. 122. and Bp. SHERLOCK's, vol. iv. Diſc. 2, p. 72. ed. 1764.

[25] See Biſhop CONYBEARE's Sermon on Myſteries; in vol. iii. ENCHIRIDION THEOLOGICUM.

DISC. IV. Having thus far noticed and endeavoured to account for the different conceptions, which many perſons have entertained at different periods of their age, we may now briefly remark on the figurative ſenſe in the words of the Apoſtle; by which he would intimate the increaſe of knowledge which will enlighten our ſouls, when we are raiſed to a life immortal. That ſuch increaſe will *probably* enſue, we have reaſon to expect from analogy. For, not only are men more intelligent than children, but generations of men become wiſer as they advance in ſucceſſion. Hence we find, that of the objections[26], which the diſputers of old brought forward, as irreconcileable with the Divine

[26] "Had the Epicurean Atheiſts of old, or the foremen-
"tioned modern Aſtronomer, duly examined theſe things,
"they would not have ſo raſhly pronounced concerning the
"*faultineſs* of the Creation; they would have ſeen on the
"foregoing principles, that what upon their hypotheſes is
"ſo irregular and uncertain, is in reality moſt uniform and
"determinate; and that all their complaints are founded
"upon their ignorance of the true Syſtem of the World."
See "Enquiry into the Cauſe and Origin of Evil," by Dr. JOHN CLARKE, p. 125, ed. 1720. See alſo Dr. BENTLEY'S "Confutation of Atheiſm," Serm. 8, S. 10.

Attri-

Attributes, many proceeded entirely from ignorance of facts, which have ſince been diſcovered by phyſical inquiries: and of the cavils, which in paſt centuries the ſceptics made to the Scriptures, many were founded in want[27] of that critical and hiſtorical knowledge, which has been ſince more widely diffuſed through the whole body of Chriſtians. DISC. IV.

Moreover, from the manner in which God by gradual Prophecies, at firſt obſcure, then ſomewhat more plain, and finally diſtinct, revealed the coming of the Meſſiah; and from the order in which Chriſtianity, the better Diſpenſation, ſucceeded the Jewiſh œconomy, which was but a preparatory introduction to a more excellent covenant; from theſe methods of proceeding in the Divine Adminiſtration we might conclude, that degrees of improved knowledge in

[27] In MICHAELIS's Introduction to the New Teſtament; JORTIN's Remarks on Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, vol. i.; GRAY's Key to the Old Teſtament; and HARMER's Obſervations on divers Paſſages of Scripture; the Reader will find this aſſertion proved true.

DISC. IV. truths reſpecting the nature of God and the means appointed for Man's Redemption, will hereafter be communicated in that ſtate of exiſtence, to which we are progreſſively approaching.

To the ſame concluſion we are alſo led, by conſideration of the comparative difference which neceſſarily ſubſiſts between a ſtate imperfect and perfect. Our preſent condition is imperfect, and to it are adapted all our faculties[25]. The mind now perceives through organs, which even in their utmoſt vigour are but limited in their powers; and which by various accidents loſe the force even of thoſe limited powers. Our future condition will be perfect; in that we ſhall probably be endued with more clear perception through the means of bodily organs, proportionably improved; and as the powers of perception, ſo alſo thoſe of our underſtanding, may be infinitely more enlarged.

[25] See Dr. REID, on the "Intellectual Powers of Man," Eſſay 2. c. i. p. 76, 77. 80. 105. ed. 1785.

Such

Such grounds for hoping this will be the case, we have even from analogy. But there is still a foundation on which we may more firmly rely; it is the declaration of St. Paul, assuring us that hereafter we shall discern spiritual things with the utmost clearness, or, to use his own emphatical language, "face "to face[29]." And a greater than St. Paul hath given us encouragement, to prepare our souls by the cultivating of right affections: even Christ himself hath solemnly pronounced, "Blessed are the pure in heart, "for they shall see God[30]."

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The reflections to be made on what has been said are briefly these:

Petulant contradiction, vain arrogance, and bold assumption create disgust in every season of life: but more particularly when predominant in that age which, from unavoidable inexperience, is most subject to error, and which therefore should be docile and open to conviction.

The degree of our misconception will probably be less, and the time of its dura-

[29] 1 Cor. xiii. 12. [30] St. Mat. v. 8.

DISC. IV. tion proportionably ſhorter, accordingly as greater care to guard us from falſe opinions has been beſtowed on us in the courſe of our education. Of what vaſt importance then is it, that elementary principles of the pureſt kind ſhould be aſſiduouſly[31] inculcated! And how unſpeakably valuable is that education which teaches to youthful days nothing that manhood muſt labour to unlearn!

However the cenſorious may be inclined through malevolence to attribute a change of ſentiments to improper motives, yet, in the eſtimation of candid judges habituated to reflection, it ſullies no man's honour to abandon a miſtaken and adopt a right principle[32]; it degrades no man's underſtanding to acknowledge he has thought erroneouſly, but that after mature inquiry he has alter-

[31] Hoc opus, hoc ſtudium, parvi properemus et ampli,
SI PATRIÆ VOLUMUS, SI NOBIS VIVERE CARI.
HOR. 1 Epiſt. 3. 18.

[32] Ου γαρ κατηγορια αυτου προτερον ουτα φαυλον, υστερον γινεσθαι χρηστον· αλλα το πρωτερον ουτα σπουδαιον, υστερον μεταβαλλεσθαι προς πονηρον.
CHRYSOSTOM, vol. vii. p. 659, A. ed. Paris, 1616.

ed

ed[33] his opinions: for very little do they an- DISC. IV.
ſwer the purpoſe of increaſing age, who become not uſefully wiſer, as they grow older.

If after long experience and better information we have been ſo happy as to correct our judgment, yet let us not thence forget there was a time when, to our ſorrow, we ourſelves were differently perſuaded; nor let us be ſo uncandid as to make no allowance for the errors of perſons ſtill deceived, errors in which ourſelves perhaps were once involved[34].

Neither

[33] Beatum, cui etiam in ſenectute contigerit, ut ſapientiam, veraſque opiniones adſequi poſſit.

CIC. de Fin. v. 21. from PLATO.

For a ſtriking inſtance of ingenuous confeſſion and manly deciſion, ſee Bp. HORSLEY's Tracts, p. 280. edit. 1789.

Bp. WATSON ſays of LE-CLERC, "When his judgment was matured by age, he was aſhamed of what he had written on the ſubject (of Geneſis) in his younger years; he made a public recantation of his error, by annexing to his Commentary on Geneſis, a Latin Diſſertation concerning Moſes, the author of the Pentateuch, and his deſign in compoſing it."

Apology for the Bible, p. 43.

[34] The Manichæans were far enough from being heretics of the better ſort: yet Auguſtin, addreſſing himſelf to them,

DISC. IV. Neither with reſpect to the injudicious ſentiments and imprudent words of thoſe, who have afterwards perceived and lamented their folly, let our memory be retentive to ſo malignant a purpoſe, as to treaſure up the language of their former indiſcretion for a ground of obloquy[35] and an occaſion of ridicule. "Reproach not a man that turneth "from ſin[36]," ſays the ſon of Sirach prudently and humanely. But if even ſins forſaken ſhould no longer be recollected, ſurely errors that have been amended ſhould be buried in oblivion. Ill indeed does it become man to reproach his fellow-creature with paſt miſconceptions: for whatever may be our progreſs in thinking rightly on many

them, treats them with lenity and compaſſion. He had been one of them himſelf, and knew how hard it was to ſhake off inveterate errors and prejudices.

Dr. JORTIN's "Diſcourſes concerning the Chriſtian "Religion." Diſc. 1. p. 73. ed. 4th.

[35] Veterum quidem culpam intempeſtivè objicere, inimici et alienis erroribus petulanter inſultantis animi eſt.

FREINSHEMII Suppl. Livii, xii. 12.

[36] Eccleſiaſticus, viii. 5.

ſubjects,

ſubjects, ſtill ignorance of others without number is inſeparable from human nature through the whole of this life. DISC. IV.

It remains for our exiſtence in a future ſtate, that our ignorance ſhould be gradually removed: and among other bleſſings reſerved for the juſt and good, it is probably one, that there ſhould be extended to them a continual progreſſion[37] in attainments ſpiritual and intellectual. This is a recompence which every one who loves God and virtue, ſanctity and knowledge, will labour to obtain: and "Bleſſed are they which hunger "and thirſt after righteouſneſs, for they ſhall "be filled[38]."

[37] For any thing that appears, there may be in the human mind powers and faculties equal to thoſe of the higheſt angels, which, in the future ſtate, when the ſoul is united to its glorified body, will diſplay themſelves in an admirable manner; agreeably to our Lord's declaration, Matt. xiii. 43. "*Then ſhall the righteous ſhine forth as the* "*Sun in the kingdom of the Father.*"

Dr. MACKNIGHT's Eſſ. 7. v. ii. "New Literal Tranſlation."

[38] St. Matt. v. 6.

DISCOURSE V.

The Conſequences of Actions are to be conſidered.

ECCLESIASTICUS, vii. 36.

Whatſoever thou takeſt in hand, remember the end, and thou ſhalt never do amiſs.

DISC. V.

IN the exerciſe either of liberal or mechanic arts, it is uſual with thoſe who practiſe them to form in their minds ſome plan of the work intended, before they begin to execute; and to contemplate in imagination[a] the effect which will be produced by

[a] Facile quoque ex jam dictis evincitur, neminem unquam Artificem manum operi cum fructu admoviſſe, niſi prius vivam Totius Collocationis imaginem animo ſuo haberet inſcriptam.

JUNIUS de Pictura Veterum, l. iii. 5. 4.

the particular mode of proceeding they mean to adopt. It were to be wiſhed that all men would thus deliberate on concerns of a moral nature; and that before they begin any ſingle act, more particularly before they enter on a courſe of actions, they would ſeriouſly aſk themſelves in what it muſt terminate [a].

DISC. V.

The ſeaſon indeed for making this inquiry, is not the hour in which the paſſions are imperious. With ſuch violence do they agitate the mind, that they impel it to overlook all conſequences, and by any means to accompliſh the object of its wiſhes, regardleſs of what may thence enſue. Intervals of calm and ſober repoſe are the proper periods for meditation: in them we may recollect, from example and precept, what different ends moſt uſually follow either a right or wrong line of conduct, and we may previouſly fix in our hearts ſome determined reſolutions, which may be helpful to us when we come to ſtruggle with temptations.

[a] Εν ἁπασι δε τοις εργοις ευχ' ὑτω της αρχης μνημονευομεν, ὡς της τελευτης αισθησιν λαμβανομεν. ISOCRAT. ad Demonic.

And

DISC. V. And herein the great advantage of the Sabbath, and the utility of diſcourſes framed for inſtruction, obviouſly appear. By affording reſt from worldly employments, the Sabbath gives leiſure for ſelf-examination; for reflecting at paules not far diſtant on our paſt actions; for comparing our manners with the rules preſcribed by the Goſpel; for marking the particulars in which we have deviated from the laws of morality and religion; and for propoſing amendment of what has been done amiſs, in the future progreſs of our lives. And to theſe means of moral improvement moſt highly conducive muſt be Diſcourſes, which teach the ignorant to know their duty; which to the well-informed recall truths they had before learned; which awaken all to a ſenſe of right, and animate them to perſevere in habits of temperance, juſtice, and piety, by conſideration of that end which awaits us all, the ſtate of future rewards and puniſhment proportioned to our good or evil actions done in this life preſent.

When-

Whenever then our mind is undiſturbed by paſſions, and eſpecially on thoſe more ſolemn days, the ordinances of which are deſigned and calculated to encourage reflection, we ſhall do well to ſtrengthen our love of virtue by premoniſhing ourſelves of the evil conſequences which proceed from vice. On the preſent occaſion be this our employment; on which let us now enter. DISC. V.

The firſt duty of man is to the God that made him. By reaſon we are led to know there is a God; by gratitude we are bound to thank Him; by love to adore Him; by fear to obey Him; by ſelf-regard, as we value the continuance of Divine favour, we are prompted to offer unto him our payers[3]. And they that on their hearts have thus engrafted a ſenſe of pious and moral obligation towards God, have laid the deepeſt and

[3] Many of the arguments uſed by Socrates, partly with Ariſtodemus, and partly with Euthydemus, on theſe important ſubjects, deſerve the ſerious attention of the learned Reader. The diſcoveries even of Natural Religion are ſuch in many reſpects, as to leave men of no religion abſolutely without excuſe.

XENOPHON's Memorabilia, l. i. c. 4. and l. iv. c. 3.

firmeſt

DISC. V. firmeſt foundation[4] of right conduct on all occaſions in which moral good or evil is concerned. But paſs from them to others, who live as though there were no God in the world. If they are in the higher or middle rank of ſociety, they indulge, without regard to conſcience or even decency, the inclinations which lead them to ſome favourite vices. Inſenſible alike to the infamy which they ſtamp on their own character, and to the injury done, perhaps irreparably, to thoſe who are corrupted by them, they ruin innocence in other families; and into ther own houſes by bad example introduce immoral practices, the effects of which are calamitous to their children or

[4] Striking is the reflection, with which Xenophon concludes the account given of the dialogue holden by Socrates with Ariſtodemus, on the exiſtence and providence of the Gods.

"In my opinion, converſation of this kind influenced "thoſe, who had intercourſe with him, to avoid actions "impious, unjuſt, and baſe, not only when they were in "the ſight of men, but even when they were alone: for "they would be perſuaded, that not a ſingle thing they "did could eſcape the notice of the Gods."

XEN. Mem. l. i. c. iv. 19.

domeſtics.

domeſtics. Thus inſtead of laying a foun- DISC.
dation for eſteem and happineſs to their V.
poſterity and dependents, by directing them in the ways of prudence and piety, they entail the diſcredit and miſeries which ariſe from debauched courſes. In this manner act many of thoſe, who being in affluent or competent circumſtances preſume to erect themſelves as ſuperior to the duties and reſtraints of religion.

If in a lower condition of life we look among perſons, who habituate themſelves to neglect religious ordinances, we ſhall find they have commonly all the vices of the more wealthy, without adequate means by which to gratify their depraved inclinations. Idleneſs leads them to drunkenneſs and profligacy; drunkenneſs and profligacy bring them to want; want urges them to diſhoneſty; and diſhoneſty is puniſhed by a premature and ignominious death. Such then being the fruits of irreligion in every ſtation of life, it becomes thoſe who would conſult their own greater happineſs, and who wiſh either to procure the regard or promote the

DISC. V. benefit of ſociety, to cultivate a diſpoſition for rational piety, and declare to the world their faith in God, by aſſembling themſelves in a public manner for the purpoſe of divine worſhip.

Next to God, parents claim our duties[5]: and among theſe duties, obedience is not the leaſt. The diſcharge of filial obedience has ſeldom cauſed repentance; but the neglect of it has frequently been productive of ſorrow. The years of youth muſt neceſſarily be years of ignorance and inexperience: maxims of diſcretion cannot yet have been collected, and knowledge of life cannot yet have been learned[6]. In theſe, however, as in other reſpects, whatever is defective in their ſons and daughters, parents are able and anxious to ſupply: and happy are they who avail themſelves of ſuch faithful and affectionate guides. But often there predominate in young minds an impa-

[5] On this ſubject ſee XENOPHON's Memorabilia, l. ii. c. 2.

[6] Temeritas eſt videlicet florentis ætatis.
CIC. de Sen. ſ. vi.

tience

tience[7] of controul, a contempt of advice, a perverſeneſs of will, which hurries them into the very follies they are cautioned to avoid. Mark, however, the end of petulance, preſumption, and obſtinacy. To fill that ſtation, for which the parent has long endeavoured to prepare him, as the Son neither applies his attention, nor conforms his inclination, ſo he acquires no ability. Thoſe means of ſupport and improvement, to furniſh which perhaps the parent hath often denied himſelf many innocent pleaſures and deſirable comforts, are thrown away on purſuits either of ſenſeleſs extravagance or of wanton profligacy. And when that period arrives, in which the man is to take his part in the active duties of ſocial life, he becomes contemptible, becauſe he has neither knowledge, nor induſtry, nor prudence to recommend him. Such is the uſual fruit of diſobedience to parents. DISC. V.

The Divine precept, which in expreſs terms commands obedience to parents, does

[7] Monitoribus aſper. HOR.

DISC. V. also by implication enjoin that similar duty be paid towards persons, who by the protection they afford us, and the authority they bear over us, stand in the place of parents: such as magistrates, who are our civil parents. Religion and Law are in their nature inseparably united. Their principles are the same; their object is the same; they mutually co-operate to make men good, that they may thence make them happy; and thus both shew their origin to be from God [s]; the fountain of all goodness and happiness.

[s] Ει μοι ξυνειη φερουτι μοιρα ταν
Ευσεπτου αγνειαν λογων
Εργων τε παντων, ων νομοι προκεινται
Υψιποδες, ουρανιαν δι' αιθερα
Τεκνωθεντες· ων Ολυμπος
Πατηρ μονος, ουδε νιν θνατα
Φυσις ανερων εστιτεν, ουδε
Μην ποτε λαθα κατακοιμασεις
Μεγας εν τουτοις Θεος
Ουδε γηρασκει.——

BRUNCK's Sophocles, Ed. T. 863.

"Of law there can be no less acknowledged, than that "her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of "the world: All things in heaven and earth do her ho-

"mage

pineſs. Therefore, generally ſpeaking, the beſt and moſt judicious of men are the firmeſt ſupporters of Religion and Law; and none but bad or miſtaken perſons will encourage diſobedience to the dictates of either. The civil magiſtrate is the repreſentative and miniſter of law. His province is to ſecure the peaceable enjoyment of the moſt invaluable bleſſings to every member of ſociety. So long then as he confines himſelf within the limits of that power, with which the community has entruſted him, diſobedience to the civil magiſtrate is an offence againſt public good, which deſerves and receives condign puniſhment inflicted by vindictive juſtice. And as the ſafety of every perſon is more or leſs endangered by the outrages which are committed in defiance of the magiſtrate, who is the interpreter and enforcer of the law; ſo DISC. V.

" mage, the very leaſt as feeling her care, and the greateſt " as not exempted from her power: Both angels and " men, and creatures of what condition ſoever, though " each in different ſort and manner, yet all with uniform " conſent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and " joy." HOOKER's Eccleſiaſtical Polity, b. i. Concluſion.

DISC. V. in duty to himself and society at large, every person is bound to exert[p] himself in bringing to justice the violators of law, and the disobedient to lawful governors. Observed then, as every individual is by so many spectators, who are all deeply interested to restrain illegal conduct, let no man presume to disobey the magistrate, in hopes of impunity.

From parents and magistrates our duties extend to the whole compass of social life; differing in kind, according to the relations we bear to the several members, with whom we are connected. But there is one rule of universal application: it is, that we injure no one, neither in his own person, nor in the person of her who should be dearest to him, and is most closely united with him; nor in his property; nor in his character: and in proportion as this general law is violated by us, we are in danger of bringing on ourselves consequences more or less serious and fatal.

[p] Νομῳ βοηθειν· Ανομιᾳ πολεμειν.
Diog. Laert. in vitâ Pythagoræ.

Into

Into extremes[10] of wickedneſs few are ſeen to plunge themſelves at once: there is uſually a progreſſion from ſmall beginnings to the laſt act of depravity. Theſe beginnings originate from improper indulgence given to our paſſions at an early period of our age. Let us then briefly examine this ſource of miſconduct, trace the degrees by which the heart proceeds from ſlight to groſs offences; and when we have viewed the enormity to which trivial faults may ultimately lead, let even trivial faults be avoided by us to the utmoſt of our power. DISC. V.

With a view to our preſervation there is implanted in us a diſpoſition to reſent injuries: and as the love of life is ſtrong in our nature, this tendency to reſentment equally prevails. So long as the influence of this propenſity confines itſelf merely to the repelling of what may be hurtful to us, the propenſity itſelf, being directed to the end for which it was intended, has nothing in it blameable. But if we ſuffer ourſelves

[10] Nemo repente fuit turpiſſimus. JUVENAL.

DISC. V.

to be irritated on ſlight [11] occaſions, and by cauſes of provocation rather imaginary than real, then we are culpable in miſapplying our paſſion of anger; and through ſuch miſapplication we firſt inevitably excite uneaſineſs to ourſelves, and then probably create unhappineſs to the objects of our diſpleaſure: and long continued habits of indulging reſentment without controul have often terminated [12] in a crime of the deepeſt dye, even in murder itſelf. If then we are either fretful or ſullen, or haſty in our diſpoſition, let us begin early to learn, and never ceaſe to practiſe with vigilance over ourſelves, that moſt neceſſary, but moſt difficult [13] art, the art of governing our temper. If this be not acquired and exerciſed, we

[11] Non maximæ, quæ maximæ ſunt interdum iræ, injuriæ Faciunt. TER. Hec. 3. 1. 27.

[12] ——Qui non moderabitur iræ,
Infectum volet eſſe, dolor quod ſuaſerit et mens,
Dum pœnas odio per vim feſtinet inulto.
HOR. Ep. l. i. ii. 60.

[13] —— Animum rege, qui niſi paret,
Imperat; hunc frænis, hunc tu compeſce catenis.
HOR. Ep. l. 1, 2, 62.

ſhall

DISC. V.

ſhall continually be in danger either of expoſing ourſelves to ridicule by acting abſurdly; or of loſing eſteem by ſpeaking rudely; or of incurring contempt by offering violence: it may too happen, in a fatal and unguarded moment of intemperate fury, that we may perpetrate a deed, the penalty of which muſt be untimely and ignominious death.

There are paſſions, in the reſtraint of which our chaſtity is concerned; and not our chaſtity only, but with it alſo are connected our health, our abilities, our fortune, our character. The impure ſins of darkneſs have a natural tendency to debilitate [14] the body, to enfeeble the mind, to ſlacken induſtry, to baniſh attention in the prudent management of temporal affairs [15], and to create indifference for the eſteem of ſociety. When appetite hath once gotten dominion

[14] Libidinoſa et intemperans adoleſcentia effœtum corpus tradit ſenectuti. Cic. de Sen. ſ. 9.

[15] Labitur interea res, et Vadimonia fiunt,
Languent officia, atque ægrotat fama vacillans.
Lucr.

over

DISC. V. over reaſon, its cravings are inſatiable, and *will* be gratified at the expence of conſtitution, talents, poſſeſſions, name, honour, religion. Be therefore the firſt and earlieſt powers of our reaſon exerted in reſiſting temptations which would lead to impurities; and be it the ſubject of our daily prayer, that God by his grace would enable us to avoid committing thoſe ſins, the fruits of which are infamous, and the "wages" deſtructive.

If it were poſſible to realiſe the viſionary plan of making all property equal, there could not happen to human ſociety a greater misfortune than the adopting of ſuch a meaſure. For if to property, and the objects connected with it, were preſcribed a limit which might not be exceeded, that ardour with which in the preſent ſtate of competition and inequality either profeſſional or commercial arts are purſued, would be extinguiſhed in thoſe who are now induſtrious; and as for perſons already diſpoſed to idleneſs, if they were exempted from the neceſſity of working for their ſubſiſtence, in want of better employment, (ſince

(ſince employment of ſome kind man will find to amuſe himſelf,) they would have recourſe to the moſt vicious practices; whence the groſſeſt corruption of manners and principles would ſoon become general. Such depravity would create univerſal confuſion, and thence muſt reſult the dire calamities of civil diſcord. On the other hand, let there be holden out encouragement to the encreaſing of property by fair and honeſt means, there will then be promoted ingenuity in diſcovering arts and application in learning them; activity in acquiring wealth, and frugality in expending it; temperance, the effect of frugality; ſubordination ariſing from the arrangement of different perſons into different claſſes, and from the diſtribution and gradation of labour in each claſs; law that will regulate our dealings one with another; and religion that will enforce the dictates of law by the moſt ſolemn ſanctions. Such are the bleſſings derived from the free power of augmenting property. But in vain were this power either given or exerciſed, if property, when acquired, were not ſecure: DISC. V.

DISC. V. ſecure: for in that caſe, all the evils of equaliſation would enſue, with the additional grievance that the honeſt and induſtrious would be ſpoiled and plundered by the villanous and diſſipated. In wiſdom therefore, and with the trueſt ſenſe of regard for the real intereſts of every individual in ſocial life, divine and human laws unite in ſecuring property, by deeming it ſacred, and by annexing penalties of the ſevereſt nature to violations of the commandment which proclaims "Thou ſhalt not ſteal." The principle on which theſe penalties are inflicted, is not regard to the intrinſic value of the property ſtolen; but it is conſideration of the horrid train of enormities which would be introduced, if thefts were allowed to paſs with impunity. To prevent ſuch enormities, the ſtrongeſt check is laid on that which is the ſource of many other crimes, the ſin of ſtealing.

Although extremities of puniſhment and infamy await only deeds notoriouſly iniquitous, yet to every act of fraudulent deſign is affixed diſgrace, becauſe ſuch act is contrary to

to justice, because it tends to destroy mutual confidence, and because, if suffered to proceed without public disapprobation, it might subvert that foundation of civilised society, security of property. He therefore that wishes to be esteemed as a man of upright integrity, must not only abhor such acts of injustice as will call for the vengeance of criminal law, but he must detest the little arts of deceiving, the cunning tricks of overreaching, the subtle contrivances of secret thieving. From deceiving, over-reaching, and thieving begins the career of improbity; and though persons who are guilty of these offences, may not, perhaps, venture quite so far as the utmost transgression of justice, yet it seldom happens but that sooner or later they are detected in some transaction, the business of which renders them contemptible. DISC. V.

Whatever may be their situations, yet most persons are affected by loss of character[16]. Some are injured in their business;

[16] Nam famæ quidem ac fidei damna majora esse, quàm quæ æstimari possent. Liv. lii. 72.

some

DISC. V. ſome are bereft of peace in their minds; ſome are even deprived of life by the virulence of calumny. The "bearing of falſe "witneſs" therefore, when it hurts any one in his employment is indirect robbery: when it cauſes vexation, it is malicious cruelty: when it ſhortens exiſtence, it is abſolute murder. And indeed, although the crime of vilifying another not unfrequently ariſes from wanton levity, which thinks it witty to ſport with reputation, yet the ſin of bearing falſe witneſs very often proceeds from direct intention to do injury, and is often committed for the purpoſe of gratifying either deſire, or envy, or revenge: from which ſource whenever it ſprings, it hath in one caſe all the guilt of adultery, in another of ſtealing, in another of aſſaſſination. On no pretence ſhould encouragement be given to evil-ſpeaking. He that loves to indulge his petulance or vanity by traducing character, ſhould be ſhunned [17] as a man that would diſturb ſociety: and he

[17] ——Longè fuge; dummodo riſum
Excutiat ſibi, non hic cuiquam parcet amico.
HOR. S. i. 4. 34.

that

that with baſe deſign brings a falſe accuſation against the innocent, deſerves that punishment, which, if the guilt were proved, the accuſed perſon would have undergone[13].

DISC. V.

Experience proves, that although the greater part of mankind do not proceed to extremities of ſin, yet all are diſpoſed to one or other of thoſe vices, which, if purſued, would lead to ſuch extremities. Now as no man, who addicts himſelf to a favourite vice, can preſcribe to himſelf bounds which he is aſſured he ſhall not be tempted to tranſgreſs, ſo it will be prudent in thoſe, who foreknow the wretchedneſs they ſhould endure if they ſhould be carried on to ſins of the higheſt enormity, to ſecure their happineſs by reſiſting vices of inferior guilt, the tendency of which is ultimately towards deſtruction. This will be avoiding the very entrance on a wrong courſe. But what is the practice of the inconſiderate? The natural propenſity they have to vice

[13] By a moſt equitable ſentence "they hanged Haman "on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai." ESTHER, vii. 10.

DISC. V. they encreaſe by intemperance, and ſtimulate by drunkenneſs. He that through drunkenneſs hath loſt his reaſon, is prepared for the committing of every ſin, to which either his own prevailing inclination may direct, or the ſeducing words of debauched companions may entice him. The evils indeed of exceſs in drinking are ſo many and ſo ſerious, that to caution the unthinking againſt contracting habits of indulgence in this vice, will be much to our preſent purpoſe. And this cannot be done more effectually, than by ſhewing the progreſs of the vice itſelf, and the gradation from inconveniences to loſſes, and from loſſes to miſeries, by which it works the ruin of its votaries.

When the fervour of youth is ſo far abated, that wearineſs of application either in mind or body cannot be relieved by ſimple ſuſtenance, recourſe to means of ſupport more nutritive is confeſſedly innocent. And no reaſonable perſon will deny, that in proper places and on ſuitable occaſions, the rules of ſtrict temperance may be enlarged, and ſomething more than what abſolute neceſſity requires,

requires, may be granted to social festivity. DISC. V.
Thus far all is well: let us only be moderate, and there is nothing hitherto culpable: in either of these cases, we do but use our liberty to that purpose which reason allows, and which religion does not forbid. But this liberty, like many other powers, when entrusted to the inexperienced and thoughtless, becomes to them an occasion of much mischief, through the misapplication with which it is perverted. Does nature require additional nourishment? That, which prudently applied would have been salutary, by imprudent excess they make injurious to their health. Are seasons of relaxation allowable? The enlivening conversation of festive hilarity is succeeded either by the ridiculous incoherence, or noisy clamour, or humiliating insensibility of drunkenness. Proceeding thus, perhaps for some few years, they at length anticipate the wants of nature, and neglecting at frequent intervals their necessary occupation, they misspend hours and days in drowning their intellect, and in reducing themselves either to the stupidity of idiots, or the phrenzy of mad-

DISC. V. men. Thus grows the habit. And now for its conſequences.

If the perſon addicted to exceſſive drinking be deſigned for a learned profeſſion, the vice he is purſuing will aſſuredly tend to diſqualify him for intellectual attainments. For through the phyſical operations of repeated drunkenneſs, the fineſt mental abilities, whether ſtrong ſenſe, or retentive memory, or quick imagination, will gradually be impaired: and it is too often ſeen, that many, who when young were admired for their uncommon capacity, have at an early ſtage of manhood, been lamented by thoſe who loved, and inſulted by thoſe who envied them, as men who had beſotted the brighteſt talents, had become burthenſome to themſelves, diſgraceful to their ſociety, and contemptible to the world; and this ſacrifice of all their nobler faculties they had made to the miſerable gratifications of a low vice!

In the line of commerce or agriculture, if he, who by his ſituation ſhould be the chief director, habituates himſelf to drunkenneſs, either his ingenuity in planning becomes gradually dull, or his calculations of loſs and gain

gain are irregular; till at length he finds himſelf ſunk into diſrepute and fallen into decayed circumſtances. Degraded and diſtreſſed, he has then only to lament his paſt folly with unavailing ſorrow, a ſorrow that can reſtore him neither his forfeited credit nor his ſquandered opulence. DISC. V.

If drunkenneſs be the vice of one in humble condition, it ſoon reduces him to want and wretchedneſs. For as the drunkard hath neither induſtry to undertake, nor capacity to execute any work aſſigned him, he is diſcarded by thoſe, who in exchange for his labour would have given him ſubſiſtence; and then for his daily food he has no other means of ſupply, than either the precarious earnings of diſgraceful beggary, or the more infamous wages of diſhoneſt theft.

Such are ſome of the inconveniences, loſſes, and miſeries, by which drunkenneſs ruins thoſe who are addicted to it, in matters merely of worldly concern. But added to theſe calamities are other evils of a momentous nature. That body, which God hath given him, endued with health, ſtrength, and other powers fitted for the purpoſes of

DISC. V. active life, the drunkard by his intemperance makes disfigured and decrepit[19] at that period of his age, when had he lived in sobriety he had been firm and robust. That soul, which God hath imparted to him, furnished with marvellous faculties and intended for improvement in spiritual perfection, by his habitual excess he hath either stupified[20], or rendered the seat of impurity and depravity.

But after some few years (for the whole term of man's life extends but to few years!) cometh the end of all their actions to the drunkard, to the bearer of false witness, to the stealer, to the adulterer, to him that disobeyeth his parents, to the despiser of religion, and blasphemer against God. To this end should our view be directed. For,

[19] Οἱ νεοι μεν οντες, τοις σωμασιν αδυνατοι εισι, πρεσβυτεροι δε γενομενοι, ταις ψυχαις ανοητοι· απονως μεν λιπαροι δια νεοτητος τρεφομενοι, επιπονως δε αυχμηροι δια γηρως περῶντες· τοις μεν πεπραγμενοις αισχυνομενοι, τοις δε πραττομενοις βαρυνομενοι· τα μεν ἡδεα εν τη νεοτητι διαδραμοντες, τα δε χαλεπα εις τα γηρας αποθεν μενοι. Xen. Mem. l. ii. c. i. s. 31.

[20] See Bishop Sherlock, vol. iv. Disc. 10. p. 265. ed. 1764.

surely

ſurely as there is a God and a future ſtate, the iſſue will not be the ſame to him that hath rightly employed, and to him that hath miſuſed his talents; to him that hath endeavoured to lead a virtuous life, and to him that hath perſiſted in a courſe of wickedneſs. Even in this ſtate of exiſtence, the fruits of virtue and vice are, generally ſpeaking, different as to mental ſatisfaction: but however with reſpect to this or other circumſtances our actions may terminate here, yet *this* is not the only ſtate for which man is deſigned. There will be another ſtate; in which, it is both reaſonable to conclude, and ſcriptural to affirm, that thoſe who have done good will be happy, and thoſe who have done evil will be miſerable. If this final reſult of our preſent conduct were duly remembered, we ſhould have the ſtrongeſt inducement moſt cautiouſly and conſcientiouſly to avoid not only actual ſin, but even whatever in its remote conſequences may lead to ſin. DISC. V.

DISCOURSE VI.

Cauſes which make Men diſlike Truth.

GAL. iv. 16

Am I therefore become your enemy, becauſe I tell you the truth?

DISC. VI. AMONG other ill effects of inordinate propenſity and vicious inclination, there is this moſt unhappy and prejudicial conſequence; at the very time, in which we have the greateſt need of ſalutary admonition, we are leaſt diſpoſed either to ſeek or adopt it. When we have thrown off the reſtraints of reaſon and religion, and yielded ourſelves to the dominion of paſſion and appetite, our will becomes averſe from every thing that has the appearance of contradiction

tion to its deſires, and our underſtanding[1] no longer retains the ſame facility and clearneſs of diſtinction in diſcerning the difference of right and wrong, of good and evil, with which it before diſcovered the true line of moral rectitude. DISC. VI.

Are we too much influenced by the ſelfiſh paſſions? Whether our exceſſive attention to private intereſt betray us into inſatiable covetouſneſs or unbounded ambition, the diſapprobation of advice will in either caſe be equally ſtrong. Any ſuggeſtions, deſigning to correct the fraudulent arts or mean practices of covetouſneſs, would be imputed either to an affectation of tender conſcience, or to a prodigal diſregard of pecuniary advantage: and any cautions, tending to retard the progreſs of immoderate ambition, would be aſcribed to rigid auſterity and ſhallow knowledge of the world.

[1] "Upon examination, you will find that men's reaſon "and judgment fail, in the very ſame proportion that "vice and paſſion prevail."

Bp. SHERLOCK Diſc. vi. vol. iv. p. 177. ed. 1764.

DISC. VI. Do the vindictive paſſions predominate? Anger impels the mind to ſome act of violence, with a degree of impetuoſity that overlooks all intermediate conſiderations, and forces it with precipitation to exhauſt its fury on the object of its reſentment. Revenge works with more ſlow but more malignant determination: it cheriſhes the wound that rankles in the boſom; aggravates the cauſes of ſuſpicion and hatred; broods over dark and inſidious thoughts; occupies itſelf with conceiving means of deſtruction to the perſons offending; and deſiſts not from its horrid purpoſe, till its deſire of retaliating be fully gratified. Thus anger is more haſty, and revenge more ſullen than to obey dictates, which would teach ſelf-government; and he that would wiſh to promote reconciliation, would but incur diſpleaſure and be deemed impertinent.

Are we deluded by the deceitfulneſs of groſſer ſin? This involves the mind in a degree of darkneſs, which cannot admit the light of truth. If the fineſt paintings have no

no beauty for the blind, nor the ſweeteſt harmony have charms for the deaf, ſo neither can moral and religious truths have any perſuaſive influence on him, who has been long accuſtomed to hear, ſee, imagine, and practiſe nothing but what is vicious. His paſſions are ſo enflamed by corrupt gratification, that they totally exclude the cooler judgment of reaſon: his appetites ſo inceſſantly demand intemperate indulgence, that they leave him no ſpace for reflection, no opportunity for the exerciſe of ſober thought, no leiſure for liſtening to the voice of conſcience: ſhould words of moral and religious concern chance to ſtrike his ear, yet from being long habituated to view all things, not immediately conducive to ſenſual pleaſure, through the falſe repreſentation of perverted judgment, he will not approve, he cannot underſtand the ſimple language of unaffected and diſpaſſionate advice. DISC. VI.

There is moreover a hardneſs of heart, which is gradually encreaſed by repeated acts of groſſer ſin. In the beginnings of vice, the pangs of conſcience will frequently and

DISC. VI. and forcibly agitate the offender: but as in the body the external limbs become leſs delicate when inured to hardſhip, ſo in the ſoul the internal ſenſes become leſs ſuſceptible of remorſe, when addicted to continual violation of ſobriety and purity. In natural and moral caſes the effect of habit is the ſame: Conſcience by degrees will grow obdurate, till at length the offender be given up to a mind ſo void of feeling[2], as to be morally dead in ſin.

As ſuch are the effects ariſing from an undue prevalence of the ſelfiſh or vindictive paſſions, and from the deceitfulneſs of groſſer ſin; we may conclude, that from one or other of theſe cauſes it generally proceeds; that although the truth be ſpoken with the pureſt intentions and for the very beſt and moſt important ſervices, yet it is frequently either received with indifference, or rejected with diſpleaſure; and thoſe who deliver it are hated as enemies and hence become objects marked out for vengeance. And upon

[2] See Eph. iv. 19.

examin-

examination of facts recorded in hiſtory, we ſhall actually find that men wiſe and exemplary, inſpired Prophets, holy Apoſtles, and even our Divine Lord himſelf, were treated with inſult and afflicted by perſecution, becauſe they admoniſhed perſons notoriouſly corrupted and enſlaved by one or other of thoſe inordinate propenſities and vicious appetites. DISC. VI.

It ſhall now be our employment to confirm this aſſertion, by ſelecting ſome inſtances from ſacred hiſtory; on which whilſt we expatiate, perhaps we may not only prove that the covetous, the ambitious, the reſentful, the groſsly ſenſual, are enemies to truth; but we may alſo ſuggeſt ſome remarks which will lead to improvement.

The cities of the plain exhibit man in the moſt abandoned ſtate of abominable depravity. To Lot, who with deep abhorrence condemned their vile practices, the inhabitants exclaimed, "this one fellow "came in to ſojourn, and he will needs be "a judge[1]." Cenſure, to minds thus im-

[1] Gen. xix. 9.

merſed

DISC. VI. merſed in the fouleſt ſins, could not be heard without extreme indignation. Blindneſs and deſtruction enſued from their wickedneſs, and to this moment their name is ſtamped with the blackeſt characters of indelible infamy.

The confinement of Joſeph, whence was it occaſioned? Like a man of integrity, he refuſed to inſult his maſter's honour; like a man of piety, he feared to violate the laws of God. "How (ſays he) can I do this "great wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God[4]?" A rebuke thus ſerious, from one of rank inferior, provoked the tempter to malicious revenge. The conſequence of his ſanctity was a falſe charge, which doubtleſs his accuſer hoped would procure his death. Impriſonment is adjudged; and thence began the proſperity of Joſeph. Thus what human iniquity had deſigned to be a puniſhment, the goodneſs of God converted into a bleſſing; an example this, which enforces and illuſtrates that moſt admirable, ſalutary, and comprehenſive precept, "keep inno-

[4] Gen. xxxix. 9.

"cency,

" cency, and take heed unto the thing that DISC.
" is right; for that shall bring a man peace VI.
" at the last[5]."

When he, that was afterwards the leader of the Israelites, began to enquire into the condition of the people, with whom by descent he was connected, he beheld " two " men of the Hebrews striving with each " other[6]." Oppressed, as they were, by servitude and cruelty, they should have been prompted, by every consideration of mutual interest and general concern, to have cultivated peace and strengthened attachment amongst themselves. When through violent anger, a disposition to unanimity had been interrupted, it was an act of benevolence to admonish the contending parties of their imprudence, in aggravating by private dissension the miseries already inflicted on them in their state of bondage. Hoping to reconcile the Hebrews that were at variance, Moses " said to him that did the wrong, " wherefore smitest thou thy brother[7]?"

[5] Pf. xxxvii. 38. [6] Ex. ii. 13. [7] Ibid.

Why

DISC. VI. Why doſt thou offer violence to one of thy own nation and kindred? He, who is the aggreſſor in any deed of injuſtice, is commonly leſs placable than he who ſuffers: he uſually perſiſts in hatred to the perſon injured, and reſents any interpoſition which would allay his animoſity. Such was the conduct of the culpable Hebrew. In return for the kindneſs deſigned by his admoniſher, he replies, "Who made thee "a prince and a judge over us; intendeſt "thou to kill me, as thou killedſt the "Egyptian[s]?" He was not content with a retort of ſcorn and inſolence, but ungratefully meant to reproach the friend of his countrymen, for having avenged an inſulted Hebrew, at the peril of his own life. So incapable of diſcerning the good purpoſe, for which thoſe who regard us give their advice, and ſo unthankful for the exertions made by them in our behalf, are we rendered by anger.

[s] Ex. ii. 14.

"Flee

" Flee to thy place[9]," exclaims Balak to Balaam, ſmiting his hands with wrath and vexation. And yet what was the offence, by which Balaam had incurred this diſpleaſure? His inclination was corrupt enough for the executing of any purpoſe enjoined him: but there was a ſuperior power of conſcience and a divine prohibition, which forbad his devoting the Iſraelites to deſtruction. Workers of iniquity require inſtruments prepared for all, even the moſt deſperate, practices: thoſe, who are yet influenced by conſcience and religion, are not fit ſervants for men, who, through means the moſt oppoſite to moral ſenſe and to reverence for God, would ſacrifice all regard for human and divine commands in order to obtain the object of their wiſhes. Balaam had in one reſpect violated his conſcience by going to Balak: but he was not ſo determined to oppoſe all reſtraints of duty, as to attempt execrating the Iſraelites in defiance of God! So far at leaſt he deſerves DISC. VI.

[9] Numb. xxiv. 11.

com-

DISC. VI. commendation, as he would not proceed to extreme evil for the wages of corruption. But Balak conceived a man, who would thus ſpeak the truth, an enemy to his intereſt, he therefore withholds from Balaam all the honours intended as a reward for unrighteous ſervices, and diſmiſſes him with reſentment.

The Levitical law had forbidden the Iſraelites ſo to alienate their land, as to ſell it paſt recovery. Ahab wiſhed to purchaſe the vineyard of Naboth, but the poſſeſſor refuſed to part with the "inheritance of his "fathers[10]." He feared to diſobey the ordinance of God, however he might have been recompenſed for ſuch tranſgreſſion. What Ahab could not acquire by purchaſe, he gained by the moſt oppreſſive iniquity. Witneſſes were ſuborned to charge Naboth with blaſphemy, and through their perjury the innocent man was condemned and ſtoned to death. No obſtruction now remained in the way of Ahab; he took poſ-

[10] 1 Kings, xxi. 3.

ſeſſion of the vineyard, ſince Naboth was no more. Elijah the prophet was ſent to reprove Ahab: the guilty violator of juſtice no ſooner beheld this pious man advancing, than he exclaimed, "Haſt thou found me, "O mine enemy"[11]?" Thus quickly does conſcience take the alarm, confound the perpetrator of an atrocious action, and dread the preſence of one who will reprove it. Elijah did but execute the duties of his office in rebuking the impieties of Ahab; but that alone was ſufficient cauſe for making him odious to a man wicked and iniquitous as Ahab was. DISC. VI.

A continuance of God's favour, and the conſequence of it, national proſperity, were promiſed to the Jews on the expreſs condition that they ſhould obey the divine commands in all reſpects, but more particularly in rejecting idolatry. Such however was their propenſity to adopt the ſuperſtitions of the people, whom they had conquered, that the temple of God was ſome-

[11] 1 Kings, xxi. 20.

DISC. VI. times polluted by the introduction of idols. Againſt a ſin thus repugnant to their own law, and in itſelf thus inſulting to the Majeſty of the Supreme Being, the prophets ceaſed not to warn their countrymen. But what return did they experience for their zeal in the cauſe of God, and for their anxiety to avert deſtruction from their cities? "They were ſtoned, they were ſawn aſun-"der, they were tempted, they were ſlain with "the ſword, they wandered about in ſheep-"ſkins and goat-ſkins, being deſtitute, afflict-"ed, tormented; they wandered in deſerts "and in mountains, and in dens and caves of "the earth[12]." Thus does St. Paul deſcribe the ſufferings of thoſe, who in ſucceſſion were raiſed up to admoniſh the Jews; and thus does he confirm the ſolemn confeſſion in which the Levites bewail before God, "our fathers "were diſobedient, and rebelled againſt "thee, and caſt thy law behind their backs, "and ſlew thy prophets, which teſtified "againſt them to turn them to thee[13]."

[12] Heb. xi. 37. [13] Neh. ix. 16—26.

When

When the Jews were reſtored from their captivity in Babylon, they did indeed deſiſt from idolatry, but in other inſtances they continued equally obſtinate againſt advice, and equally ungrateful to thoſe who ſpake the truth, as their fathers had been. In proof of this, let their conduct towards our Divine Lord be conſidered. DISC. VI.

At the time in which our Saviour dwelt on earth, the Phariſees were the leading perſons among the Jews. They were characteriſed by their pretenſions to ſuperior ſtrictneſs in the obſerving of ritual ordinances. But with all their pretenſions, as they were notoriouſly covetous and ſpiritually proud; as they perverted the law of God by traditions favourable to their own rapacity and arrogance; as their worſhip was more oſtentatious and affected, than real and ſincere; they were neither moral nor religious in the manner required by the law and the prophets. It was indeed incumbent on them to diſcharge punctually the ceremonial parts of the Moſaic inſtitution: but the ſame inſtitution

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demanded of them much more than this outward ſervice. The whole heart purified from vice, and the ſoul humbly devoted to the love and fear of God, are in their Sacred Writings continually pointed out as the moſt acceptable ſacrifices which could be offered to the Almighty. But from reformation of morals, and from principles of vital piety, as the Phariſees had deviated themſelves, ſo alſo they miſled the people; teaching them to reſt ſatisfied with external forms, but inculcating nothing of inward goodneſs. It therefore became Him, whoſe gracious purpoſe was the redemption of mankind from the practice and guilt of ſin, to reprove the vices of thoſe, who by their authority and example had corrupted moral virtue, and who, whilſt they burthened religious worſhip with numerous obſervances, had excluded that ſimple and rational ſervice of a devout mind which ſhould always accompany forms, and without which, all forms are but ſhew and hypocriſy. But this work of reformation was the chief cauſe which offended

fended the Phariſees. Chriſt was a light that ſhone amidſt darkneſs, "but the dark-"neſs comprehended it not[14]," *i. e.* did not admit, did not receive it in its full influence. Sin had blinded the eyes of their mind, that they could not diſcern "the beauty of ho-"lineſs," nor admire the excellency of goſpel precepts: "they loved darkneſs rather "than light, becauſe their deeds were evil[15]." That their faults ſhould be expoſed, their opinions contradicted, their errors corrected, their authority diminiſhed, were occaſions of reſentment never to be forgiven, till vengeance could be ſatiated by the death of Him, whoſe life and doctrine reproached their iniquity. Enſlaved as they were by the influence of malign paſſions, they had not moral liberty to exerciſe their minds in judging of our Lord's claim to Divine Miſſion from the works he wrought: nor could they be diſpoſed to acknowledge Him, whom they hated and perſecuted, as the Meſſiah that was promiſed by their ſcriptures,

DISC. VI.

[14] St. John, i. 5. [15] St. John, iii. 19.

DISC. VI. and whoſe coming was foreſeen and moſt aſſuredly believed by Abraham the founder of the Jewiſh nation. When therefore Jeſus tells them that "God was his Father[16]," that "they had not the love of God in "them[17]," that "if they believed in Moſes, "they would have believed in Him[18]" alſo, the Jews "ſought to kill him[19]." They were meditating how to execute their unjuſt purpoſe, when Jeſus again aſſerts his Divine Origin[20], enforces the neceſſity of believing on him[21] for the obtaining of ſalvation, aſſerts that thoſe only are truly free, who, through faith in Him, emancipate themſelves from the dominion of corrupt appetites; and aſſureth the Jews, that as they perſiſted in ſin they were the ſervants of ſin[22], however they might conceive themſelves free in deſcent from Abraham their progenitor. Theſe declarations were founded in truth, and on that very account ex-

[16] St. John, v. 18.
[17] St. John, v. 42.
[18] St. John, v. 46.
[19] St. John, v. 18.
[20] St. John, viii. 23.
[21] St. John, viii. 24.
[22] St. John, viii. 34.

aſperated

aſperated minds incapable of embracing or loving truth. Our Lord, "who knew what was in man[23]," and who on all occaſions "perceived the wickedneſs[24]" of his perſecutors, tells them plainly the ground of their determined malice: "Ye ſeek to "kill me, a man that hath told you the "truth[25]:" "Becauſe I tell you the truth, "ye believe me not[26]:" "Which of you "convinceth me of ſin? and if I ſay the "truth, why do ye not believe me[27]?" DISC. VI.

This obſtinacy of the Jews, in reſiſting all the means of grace vouchſafed to them by God through his prophets and Divine Son, at length terminated in ſuch a diſperſion of their people, as was never known in the records of hiſtory: and to this day they are living witneſſes atteſting the truth of our Lord's predictions, and teaching the world that rejecting the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, through vicious principles, de-

[23] St. John, ii. 25.
[24] St. Matth. xxii. 18.
[25] St. John, viii. 40.
[26] St. John, viii. 45.
[27] St. John, viii. 46.

DISC. VI. praved habits, and conceited prejudices, can be no trivial offence in the ſight of that God, who can will nothing but in the moſt perfect wiſdom and for the moſt beneficent end, and who therefore could not have ſent into the world his Eternal Son as a Divine Inſtructor and powerful Redeemer, but for purpoſes moſt important in themſelves and ſalutary in their conſequences. But as God hath ſent ſo exalted a Perſon, and through him has claimed our attention, if there be any reverence due to the commands of God, it is due to the Goſpel containing thoſe commands; and all diſregard of the Goſpel, when clearly revealed, muſt appear ſinful as being a diſhonour to God.

The diſciples of our Lord were taught by Him to expect, that in the work of their miniſtry they ſhould experience the moſt ſevere affliction. "If (ſays He) they have "perſecuted me, they will alſo perſecute "you[28]." "They ſhall lay their hands on "you, and perſecute you, delivering you up

[28] St. John, xv. 20.

"to

" to the Synagogues, and into priſons, being " brought before kings and rulers for my " name's ſake[29]." " Ye ſhall be betrayed " both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, " and friends; and ſome of you ſhall they " cauſe to be put to death[30]." " Yea the " time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you, " will think that he doth God ſervice[31]." Theſe predictions of our Lord were literally accompliſhed in the perſonal ſufferings endured by his diſciples. St. Peter and St. John being brought before the Jewiſh council, were condemned firſt to impriſonment and then to ſtripes[32]. St. James, by the command of Herod, was killed with the ſword[33]. St. Stephen, by the furious zealots, was caſt out of the city and ſtoned[34]. St. Paul thus deſcribes the evils he had ſuſtained; " Of the Jews five times received " I forty ſtripes, ſave one: thrice was I " beaten with rods, once was I ſtoned[35]."

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[29] St. Luke, xxi. 12.
[30] St. Luke, xxi. 16.
[31] St. John, xvi. 2.
[32] Acts, c. iv. & v.
[33] Acts, xii. 2.
[34] Acts, vii. 58, 9.
[35] 2 Cor. xi. 24.

And

DISC. VI. And whence all this enmity to the Apoſtles? They had given to the Jews no other offence, than that they had faithfully executed the important commiſſion which their Lord had entruſted to them, by endeavouring to convince both Jews and Gentiles that Jeſus was the Chriſt the Son of God; that ſalvation was to be obtained not by ritual obſervances, but by repentance for ſins paſt, and faith in Chriſt; and that it behoved all perſons to abandon their former wickedneſs, and thenceforth diſcharge conſcientiouſly the ſeveral duties incumbent on them, the duties of temperance in themſelves, of integrity towards their fellow-creatures, of ſanctity towards God; ſince by his own reſurrection Chriſt had demonſtrated, that from their graves he would raiſe up all that are dead, and that then ſhall follow a retribution of happineſs or miſery, diſpenſed to every one according to the good or bad uſe which he may have made of the moral powers, ſpiritual advantages, and heavenly graces beſtowed on him by God in this life.

Theſe

Theſe were truths, not acceptable to the Jews; nay more, not acceptable to many through the world [36] at large either in former or preſent days. Thoſe who love the worſt part, that is, the *ſins* of the world, its irregular affections, its vicious habits, its ſenſual pleaſures, its inordinate deſires, its corrupt practices, its groſs iniquities, are not much diſpoſed to admire or adopt the precepts either of moral virtue or Chriſtian religion. We have ſeen in ſacred hiſtory, we ſee it daily before our eyes, that in proportion as the heart is inclined to vice, it becomes leſs deſirous of knowing and leſs fit for admitting the dictates of reaſon and the doctrines of revelation. But no one in his ſober ſenſes and ſound intellect can pretend to juſtify the following of his vicious propenſities and excluding of ſerious thought; the very attempt to defend ſuch proceeding would be contradictory to the higher faculties with which he is endowed by Heaven.

DISC. VI.

[36] ——— Ob hanc rem,
Quòd ſunt, quos genus hoc minimè juvat, utpote plures
Culpari dignos. HOR. S. 1. 4. 23.

Con-

DISC. VI. Conſcience and reaſon bid us reſiſt evil tendencies, and urge us to regard the admonitions of thoſe whom experience has enabled and ſituation authoriſed to ſpeak the truth and give wholeſome counſel. If in theſe their ſuggeſtions conſcience and reaſon direct us properly, as unqueſtionably they do, then all inſinuations that would confirm the mind in habits of exceſs, and entirely divert it from ſeaſonable reflection, are to be conſidered as illuſive fallacies repugnant to right thinking, and founded on the miſrepreſentation of paſſions and appetites not duly controlled. But if looſe indulgence of paſſions and appetites be the chief obſtacle which impedes the force of reaſon and conſcience, then, as moral agents and rational Beings, we are bound to keep our paſſions and appetites in their juſt balance and under proper reſtraint. When we have effected this arduous taſk, we ſhall have conſcience and reaſon aſſiſting our minds, and making them open to the conviction[37] of truth; truth itſelf we ſhall no

[37] "Innocence is the only true preſerver of reaſon and "judgment." Bp. SHERLOCK, v. iv. D. vi. p. 184.

longer

longer diſlike; we ſhall neither lay aſide with neglect the word of exhortation written in paſt ages; nor ſhall we turn away with averſion from the advice of thoſe, who in the line of their duty, in becoming terms, and on ſuitable occaſions, deliver candidly and impartially what the nature of the caſe may require either in moral or religious concerns. No one is ſo wiſe as never to need counſel; nor ſo conſtantly attentive to what is ſtrictly right, as never to require that he ſhould be reminded of it. The moſt prudent are ſubject to indiſcretions; the moſt regular fall into inadvertencies. But from ſuch frailties we are ſoon recovered if the heart be incorrupt; our hearts, therefore, let us guard with all diligence, ſupplicating the Almighty that "by his holy inſpiration we may think "thoſe things that be good, and by his "merciful guiding may perform the ſame."

DISCOURSE VII.

Education neceſſary and beneficial to Man[1].

PROV. xxii. 6.

Train up a child in the way he ſhould go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

DISC. VII. THIS proverb naturally reſolves itſelf into two parts; the former of which contains an exhortation to the diſcharge of an important duty; the latter, a reaſon for obſerving the exhortation. To reflect on theſe diſtinct propoſitions, and on other ſub-

[1] Though ſome of the alluſions occurring in this Diſcourſe are more immediately appropriated to the condition of the children before whom the ſermon was preached, yet the arguments are of general application.

jects

jects connected with them, may be an employment not unſuitable to the purpoſe of the preſent ſolemnity. DISC. VII.

The wiſdom and propriety of the exhortation are founded on certain qualities inherent in man; which qualities if we conſider, we ſhall be convinced that the happineſs of individuals and of ſociety is materially affected, by the degree in which childhood either is, or is not trained "in the way "ſhould go" through the paths and purſuits of life.

I. It hath been obſerved concerning man, that he is remarkably prone to imitation. When we extend our view beyond the limits of our own country, and contemplate human ſocieties as they are variouſly combined and differently ſituated over diſtant parts of the globe, we are ſtruck with aſtoniſhment at the great diverſity of cuſtoms and manners, which diſtinguiſh the reſpective people among whom they prevail. In ſavage hordes their uſages are cruel and barbarous: in tribes but little elevated above brutality, they are extravagant and diſguſting:

in

DISC. VII. in ſtates highly poliſhed, they are in few caſes offenſive, but in many perhaps not ſo expreſſive of any latent meaning, as the ſeverity of ſober reflection might require. For the origin of their ſeveral cuſtoms, the generations in which they commenced could probably account: but when ſome few ages have paſſed ſince the beginning of an inſtitution, the cauſe which gave riſe to it is frequently either forgotten or diſregarded. Still, however, poſterity follow the veſtiges of their anceſtors: and of all attempts, there is no one ſo difficult as the endeavour to conquer inveterate habits, and to change eſtabliſhed practices.

If we check excurſion into remote parts, and contract our thoughts within the ſphere of our own immediate knowledge, we ſhall daily ſee that in private families every action of the parent is imitated by the child; and it is notorious, that if there be in the parent any moral defects, which are openly and repeatedly expoſed to the ſight of the child, with an apt and indeed lamentable facility, he reſembles his father in the vici-

ous lines of his character. And as it happens in the ſingle private family, ſo it happens in the aggregate family of the nation; for every nation by the ties of civil union, may be conceived as conſtituting but one family. The caſt of manners, to which the multitude is formed, depends much on the conduct of others, who, through the influence either of ſtation, or opulence, or education, induce all perſons inferior in theſe reſpects to conſider them as guides: and in this inſtance alſo it is humiliating, though neceſſary to obſerve, that patterns of immorality are followed by the ignorant with much greater promptitude, than examples of virtue. DISC. VII.

Such then being the imitative propenſity of our nature, to begin the training of children with the precaution of removing them, as early and as much as poſſible, from ſcenes where they might be corrupted by profligacy, to ſituations where they may emulate better deeds; as it is a proviſion that eſſentially conduces towards the forming of their future character, ſo indiſputably it is an act of the greateſt prudence.

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2. There needs but ſhort acquaintance with children, to know the obſtinacy with which even in their infant years they contend for the gratification of their own humour. Indeed, after all the means that can be applied to regulate its exceſſes, ſtill, from the earlieſt to the lateſt moment in which he can exert the ſtrength of his body and the powers of his underſtanding, the ſpirit of ſelf-will continues in a greater or leſs degree to actuate man. Nor is this principle in *all* caſes to be reprehended. When it makes us reſolute in ſpurning compliance with mean conditions, with baſe propoſals, and wicked inſtigations, it is generous and manly, and ſhould be cheriſhed. But when in a concern that is uſeful, prudent, and creditable, our ſelf-will aſſumes the air of contradiction, proceeding either from perverſeneſs, or ignorance, or petulance, or vanity; then it becomes a moral defect: and as it is prejudicial to the mind that is vitiated by its influence, and troubleſome to the ſociety the comforts and advantages of which it refuſes to promote, it cannot

cannot be too much diſcouraged. Reaſon- DISC. VII.
able accommodation of our own inclinations and our own ſentiments, to the diſpoſitions and opinions of others, is abſolutely neceſſary for the tranſacting of human concerns, and conſequently for the exiſtence of civil ſociety. It ſhould therefore be taught to children, becauſe they are inexperienced; it ſhould be enforced on young perſons, becauſe their paſſions are turbulent; it ſhould be recommended to all of mature years, upon the ground of theſe common and allowed maxims; that however well inſtructed may be the mind, yet information from others is often requiſite; however correct may be the judgment, yet ſtill being human it is liable to error; and according to the general rule, which prevails through life, he that requires indulgence for his own caprice and failings, muſt in equity ſhew proportionate forbearance towards the humours and imperfections of others. In every point of view, it is of great importance that children ſhould by gentle means be trained to habits of proper and due conformity:

DISC. VII. for where through miſtaken kindneſs this preparation hath been neglected, it is in the nature of things that the moſt ſerious inconveniences ſhould thence enſue. Is the ſon of any parent intended for menial ſervice? he will bring not to his buſineſs that cheerful diſpoſition and ready obedience, which will qualify him for an appointment. Is he to purſue a mechanic art? he will not be inclined to follow thoſe directions, which muſt neceſſarily be obſerved if he would acquire ſkill; and the effect of ſuch diſinclination muſt be ignorance. Is he to be verſed in ſome learned profeſſion? he will either be reluctant in applying his attention, or he will preſume on the ſelf-ſufficiency of his own abilities: in either of which caſes he hath no reaſon to expect that adequate knowledge, which is the reſult of ſevere ſtudy, patient inveſtigation, and long-continued reflection. Is he deſigned for arms? When it may be his duty to obey, he will be contumacious; when to command, he will be intemperate in the uſe of authority. Is he born to opulence and public ſtation? he

he will be imperious. Is he to live with competency in private life? he will be captious in his temper and variable in his behaviour to his family and his friends. In this manner does uncontrolled indulgence of ſelf-will make the object of it incapable, either of contributing towards public utility, or of ſecuring his own credit and happineſs; for it impedes the right exerciſe of thoſe faculties, which if properly employed might have made the man a valuable member of the community, and might have procured him not merely a ſupply of his wants, but the more deſirable acquiſitions of reſpect and honour, eſteem and love. The training then of children in the way of ſubjection to diſcreet and moderate control, is an act of judicious kindneſs in every parent; an act, on which his ſons and daughters will reflect with gratitude, when they have remarked in others the many evil conſequences which ariſe from weak and unreaſonable compliance with the wayward fancies of an age, capricious and volatile as that of childhood and youth. DISC. VII.

DISC. VII.

3. When we are born into this world, we bring not with us minds already furniſhed with methodical principles; but through the ſole gift of God, we are endowed with capacity either for the inventing or the learning of arts and ſciences. But the extent to which this capacity ſhall become ultimately advantageous, depends in a great meaſure on the degree and manner of culture with which it is improved. In ſituations where no attention is paid to the mental powers, man clothes not his body with garments; hath only caves and rocks in which to ſhelter himſelf from the inclemency of weather; hath no proſpect of a regular ſupply in articles of ſubſiſtence. In regions where capacity hath been ſomewhat exerted, man is found providing himſelf, though in a rude faſhion, with ſuch apparel, ſuch edifices, and means of ſupport, as neceſſity requires. Aſcending in the ſcale of mental improvement to a degree ſtill higher, we find him adding accommodations to neceſſaries. If we follow him thence to the moſt advanced ſtate of civilized

civilized life, we there behold him enjoying the refinements of elegance. In this condition it is, that even the husbandman and mechanic execute their works with neatness: the manufacturer adds to the goodness of his materials the ornaments of taste: the merchant, by enterprizing adventure, procures the produce of foreign climes in exchange for the superfluities of his own country: the architect relieves solidity with grace: the sculptor forms living and speaking figures, giving them either beauty by a delicate outline, or majesty by bolder features: the poet, the painter, the musician, command the passions, by the force of expression suited to their conceptions, in such a variety of style as their subjects require, simple or complex, gentle or animated, pathetic or sublime. It is in this condition, that the medicinal art contributes to prolong existence, and the healing hand to make life more desirable; in this, that astronomy soars to the heavens; in this, that man contemplates objects purely intellectual, viz. DISC. VII.

DISC. VII. truths mathematical, truths moral, truths religious.

Say then, when by the will and benevolence of his Maker man is endowed with capacity for attainments ſo wonderfully diverſified, ſhall his powers lie dormant, that he may be uncovered and unhouſed? or ſhall they be ſtopped at an early ſtage of exertion, that he may yet be removed but to a ſmall diſtance from abſolute barbariſm? or ſhall they be checked at that period, when ſomething more than what is merely requiſite hath been added? Shall they not rather be called forth to a full diſplay of their vigour; be guided, be cheriſhed, be honoured, be rewarded, as tending to adorn and exalt human nature? Whether is better, the ſoil, which through want of tillage is unproductive; or that which is ſubact, and fruitful of corn and herbage? Whether is better, the tree which in its wild ſtate gives fruit diſtaſteful; or that which by proper management is meliorated in its juices? Whether is better, the animal which untamed

tamed is uſeleſs; or that which ſubdued in ſpirit is of all brute creatures the moſt ſerviceable to us? From theſe inſtances of analogy we may argue concerning man; and conclude, that for the benefit of the individual and of ſociety it is deſirable, it is neceſſary, that his capacity ſhould be ſo directed as gradually to unfold itſelf, till it reach the utmoſt bound of perfection at which it can arrive. The very beginning therefore to train children in ſuch a way, as ſhall lead them to know and feel they have capacity, and ſhall by experience convince them of the different effects which follow either the application or the neglect of their mental powers, is a work of vaſt magnitude: it is the firſt ſtep to all that improvement in art and ſcience, which the human faculties can afterwards attain. DISC. VII.

4. In the generality of men, who are emerged from the inſenſibility of ſavage life, there is an active ſpirit which is impatient of reſt, and which *will* find itſelf employment. That ſuch a principle exiſts in the mind, there cannot be ſtronger proofs than

DISC. VII. than that eagerneſs with which they haſten to ſee any diſplay either of ſkill or agility, though extremely perilous to him who excites their admiration; and that propenſity, with which, even in nations not highly civilized, the inhabitants are addicted to games of chance [a]. In the firſt inſtance, we are not to account for it, by imputing to the ſpectators a want of feeling: nor in the laſt, are we to aſſign it as the real cauſe, that avarice is the ſecret motive. For in the one caſe, the beholders are touched with compaſſion if any injury is ſuſtained by the perſon who has diverted them: in the other, the game is frequently followed without the ſmalleſt proſpect of advantage on either ſide. Not then to cruelty, not to covetouſneſs, muſt we aſcribe it, that men have recourſe to purſuits either of this kind, or of a nature equally unimportant to the great purpoſes of life. Something to occupy and intereſt their minds is the object required. Formed for action, engaged they

[a] See Appendix.

will

will be either in nugatory amuſements, or in vicious practices, or in the buſineſs of honeſt and laudable induſtry. To train therefore children in the way that ſhall point out to them the proper methods by which they may devote the greater portion of their time to works of uſeful labour, and by which they may ſpend the hours of leiſure in innocent recreation, or profitable improvement of their moral and religious knowledge; to train children in ſuch a way, is to ſave the poor from beggary and infamy; and to reſcue the rich from that heavieſt of all burthens, that ſource of all depravity, ſelf-wearineſs. DISC. VII.

5. There is in man a moſt unhappy tendency to do evil. If there be not this tendency, whence comes it, that the very beſt of men have continual need of vigilance over their own hearts? and whence comes it, that the moſt circumſpect are ſtill ſo conſcious of their own inability to diſcharge the duties of rectitude and ſanctity, that they feel themſelves under the neceſſity of ſupplicating the Almighty for his ſpiritual aid

DISC. VII. aid to ſtrengthen their infirmity? Why ſhould we diſſemble the imperfections of our nature? or why flatter ourſelves with a falſe perſuaſion that we have greater excellence than what really belongs to our condition? In all caſes it is moſt fair, moſt prudent, and moſt ſafe, to meet and repreſent things preciſely as they are, neither exaggerating on one ſide, nor depreciating on the other. God in his wiſdom, goodneſs, and power, hath beſtowed on man ſuch rational and moral faculties, as belong not to any other creature within the compaſs of our knowledge, on the globe we inhabit. In this reſpect, man hath much whereof to glory; yet to glory with a heart of gratitude to his Maker, and with a ſenſe of dependence on him, who is the original diſpenſer of all bleſſings! But of his beſt talents man will not make that uſe, for which his Creator beſtowed them. He finds it more eaſy to indulge his appetites, than to raiſe his ſoul to higher objects; he follows therefore the courſe to which his paſſions lead him, and neglects the virtues which,

which, if he consulted his Reason, he would know to be incumbent on him as duties indispensable, because arising from the very constitution of his nature. As a forcible motive, which should continually dwell on his thoughts, and animate him to act rather as a being endued with reason, than as a creature merely possessed of animal powers; the expectation of future recompense was by divine appointment first placed within the reach of human hope, and then by divine revelation was finally confirmed, as looking to an event which will infallibly ensue. Conviction that either proportionate reward or condign punishment awaits our present conduct, is the powerful, and indeed the *only* preservative which can operate at *all* times and in *all* places, as a restraint on that tendency to evil, so predominant in our nature. Who then is the best and wisest friend to the child, and who the most effective promoter of private virtue and public happiness? Is it he, who would pervert in the young mind the disposition, which with proper culture is formed to embrace a per-

DISC. VII.

suasion

DISC. VII. ſuaſion thus ſtrongly inciting to all that can be called goodneſs? or is it not rather he, who begins with the firſt dawn of underſtanding to impreſs on the mind of his child, that there is a God every where preſent in power and knowledge; a God, who muſt therefore diſcern all the moſt ſecret actions; and who will hereafter aſſign them ſuch retribution as in the moſt perfect equity they may deſerve? Whoever oppoſes the doctrine of future retribution, is inſtrumental to the ſubverſion of the main pillar on which morality ſhould reſt: and he that hath effected this miſchievous ruin, hath been the harbinger of every vice that can be practiſed with legal impunity. On the other hand, whoever follows the concluſion to which his own nature would lead him; the concluſion in which the beſt and wiſeſt perſons of all ages have generally agreed; the concluſion which our Lord affirmed to be juſt, and in proof of his aſſertion himſelf roſe from the dead; whoever holds faſt, and inculcates as a truth infallible, that there ſhall hereafter be a different allotment to

the juſt and unjuſt, the virtuous and wicked; ſuch a man, by ſtrengthening the foundation of morality, conduces to the conſcientious and uniform obſervance of all duties that are ſalutary to private or public life. This then being the caſe, to train up a child in the way of learning, imbibing, and fixing deep in his mind, the certainty that after this there remains another ſtate of exiſtence, where goodneſs ſhall terminate in happineſs, but vice be productive of miſery; to train up a child thus, is to educate him in a principle, that will deter him from wickedneſs, and prompt him to virtue; a principle, that will carry him through temptations to do wrong, more ſafely and more ſurely than any apprehenſions of puniſhment from the civil magiſtrate can poſſibly conduct him. The inculcating therefore of this principle cannot be accounted otherwiſe than an act of the moſt prudent concern for the welfare of children. DISC. VII.

As then man is imitative, and it is better for him to emulate good than bad examples; as he is much inclined to follow his own will,

DISC. VII. will, and yet his happineſs muſt be materially diminiſhed if he learns not reaſonable accommodation; as the advantages to be derived from his capacity depend much on its being improved, and the perfection of his nature conſiſts in ſuch improvement; as his mind is ſo active, that in employment of ſome kind it will be occupied; and as there is in him a diſpoſition to do wickedly; from a view of theſe qualities belonging to man, we may fairly conclude, that the exhortation of "training up a child in the way he ſhould go," is conceived in wiſdom and delivered with propriety.

The effect, which the proverb teaches us will enſue from early care employed in education, comes next to be conſidered. In pronouncing, that from the way in which the child is trained, he will not depart when he is old, the Royal Inſtructor ſpake from that wide experience, which made him perfectly acquainted with human nature.

The mental faculties moſt diſtinguiſhable in our firſt years, are memory and imagination. Whatever is then thoroughly committed

mitted to the memory, is not ſoon forgotten; and whatever is deeply impreſſed on the imagination, is not eaſily effaced. Favourable alſo to the remembrance of what we ſee and hear in childhood and youth, is that diſengagement from the buſineſs of active life, in which we ſpend our years of preparatory inſtruction. The objects, with which we are then converſant, are but few, and thoſe few are opened to us in gradual ſucceſſion: hence there is time for one claſs of ideas to be ſettled firmly in the mind, before they are propelled by others too haſtily obtruding. From the ſtrength of our powers, and the permanency with which we are required to dwell on the ſame thoughts at this age, we account for it, that although in mature years other ideas, infinite in number and various in kind, may be ſuperinduced, yet ſhall theſe which are newly acquired be continually wearing off, whilſt thoſe of an earlier period ſhall ſo retain their place, as that however for a ſpace of time they may be conſiderably depreſſed, yet ultimately they ſhall riſe in their priſtine DISC. VII.

DISC. VII. vigour, and predominate in reſtoring the original character. The reaſon is, becauſe the one were ſtamped on the mind in the days of leiſure and retirement; whereas the other, in the tide of human affairs, with the celerity of wave ſucceeding wave, were followed up by engagements that forced the mind forward and left it no time for reflection.

And although it may often happen, that the proper effects of right inſtruction are not ſo viſible, as might be wiſhed, at *every* period of our age; yet let no one thence haſtily conclude, that therefore the elements of education are totally obliterated and the influence of it entirely decayed. It is in the moral, as in the vegetable ſyſtem. The good ſeed may for a time be retarded in its natural tendency to put forth the blade and produce the ear: but at length, under the temperature of a favourable ſeaſon, it yields abundant, though late fruit. The good principle may for ſome years lie dormant in the mind. The paſſions may depreſs, and the prevalent temptation, whatever it be,

may

may obſtruct its energy. But, unleſs in caſes of extreme depravity, the good principle, like the good ſeed, will at laſt find its way to ſhoot up, and give a tenfold meaſure of increaſe after its own kind. Muſt the truth of this aſſertion be proved? On the ſlighteſt recollection, to many will recur inſtances of perſons, who after a courſe rather of levity and folly than of determined corruption, are now in their ſeveral relations domeſtic and ſocial, acquitting themſelves in a manner creditable and reſpectable. Notwithſtanding therefore the exceptions which may be adduced to the contrary, ſtill by experience we are warranted in laying it down as a general maxim, that the efficacy of good principle imbibed in early years, hath ſtrong influence; if not over the whole of life, yet at leaſt over that portion of it, when vicious practices are peculiarly unbecoming and doubly criminal. DISC. VII.

The training then of children in the way they ſhould go, is from the nature of man indiſpenſably neceſſary; and in proſpect of the conſequences, which with reaſonable

DISC. VII. hope may be expected to follow, it is judicious; becauſe the beſt and (commonly ſpeaking) the only method by which to arrive at that moſt ſalutary end, the inducing of all men to lead their lives conſiſtently with temperance, juſtice, and piety. Any inſtitution therefore, which is well calculated to forward the work of education with ſucceſs, muſt be commended for its utility: and if moreover it proſecutes ſo important a buſineſs purely from conſiderations of humanity, then it deſerves much more than unſubſtantial praiſe; it merits the ſupport of the virtuous and aſſiſtance of the affluent, on account of its benevolence. Such then is the tendency and ſuch are the motives of that Inſtitution, which the members of the SOCIETY [3], whence originates this ſolemn and auguſt meeting, conduct in a manner, unſpeakably uſeful to the moral concerns of the preſent age and pregnant with ſimilar advantages to ſucceeding generations. For, by their ſolicitude kindly conceived, and by

[3] The Society for promoting Chriſtian Knowledge.

their

their attention prudently directed, they contribute in great measure to remove from bad example, to correct in their temper, to prepare for the exercise of various arts, to animate with a spirit of honest and laudable industry, to impress with a sense of duty to God and with a certain expectation of a future state, these, who by the united efforts of munificent PATRONS[4] are here convened in one body, these children, thousands in number! Here is a spectacle, which if either the most cold, or the most vain, or the most wicked man upon earth were only to behold, even he could not be indifferent whether these so numerous and interesting a part of his own species were taught such a knowledge of God and virtue, as should influence them to be sober, diligent, and upright; or whether they were bred up in such ignorance and vice, as should occasion them to close a short and profligate life under infamous punishment and by premature death! The sight of a congregation thus youthful, DISC. VII.

[4] The Patrons of the Anniversary.

DISC. VII. and thus beginning to walk in the path that will lead them to comfort and credit, would kindle apathy, confound paradox, and extort a benediction even from villany.

Highly beneficial both to individuals and to the public were ſuch a SOCIETY, even though to theſe children alone they confined the advantages of their bounty and regard: how much then does the importance of their ſervices riſe in our eſtimation, when in truth it may be added, that to other thouſands are extended their liberality and concern! In every diſtrict of the Britiſh nation are ſenſibly felt thoſe operations of their aid, which ſtrengthen the work of the Goſpel Miniſtry. Hence by an example which (with the utmoſt deference and ſubmiſſion be it ſpoken!) the legiſlature would act wiſely by imitating in all places of increaſed population; in a city[1] of great public reſort the erecting of a church, for the more ready admiſſion of the lower claſſes to divine worſhip, hath been liberal-

[1] Bath.

ly

ly [6] encouraged. Hence through our towns and villages, the poor, each in their own tongue [7], are furnished with the scriptures, and with other works composed on scripture principles. Hence in schools the younger are taught to know, and in their habitations the elder are exhorted to observe, the duties they owe to their Creator, their Redeemer, their Sanctifier; the duties they owe to themselves, their families, their kindred, their connexions, their magistrates, their laws, their king, their country. DISC. VII.

Nor have the exertions of this SOCIETY been limited within the boundaries of this our own kingdom. Over other regions of the earth, and some of them widely distant [8],

[6] To the Fund towards erecting a Free-Church at Bath, the Society has subscribed 500 l. and no appropriation of that sum could have been more seasonable or more useful.

[7] A fourth edition of the Welsh Bible, to the number of 10,000 copies, 8vo. with service and psalms; and 2,000 copies of the New Testament for the use of schools in Wales, are now printing; and will be sold, throughout the Principality, each book bound in calf, at *one half* of the prime cost in sheets.

[8] For an account of the Society's Protestant Missions to the East-Indies, see the Statement for 1795, p. 121.

DISC. VII. they have diffuſed the light of revealed truth, and inculcated the practice of Goſpel-morality. Nor can it be doubted, that when the reſources ſhall be competent, the ſame ſervices will be extended to thoſe colonies, where humanity hath in one quarter[9] provided a refuge for diſtreſſed Africans, and in another[10] hath appointed a place for repentance and amendment to exiled tranſgreſſors.

That the earth ſhall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, is the promiſe of God[11]! In his hand, and under the bleſſing of his providence, inſtrumental towards the accompliſhment of the divine promiſe have been the efforts of this SOCIETY! That in all their works begun and continued for the purpoſe of glorifying his holy name, the Lord may ever proſper their endeavours! muſt be the prayer of every one who thinks and feels as becomes a man; ſince the cauſe of this SOCIETY and of human nature is inſeparably the ſame. For with the Chriſtian

[9] Sierra Leone. [10] Botany Bay. [11] Iſ. xi. 9.

knowledge

knowledge promoted by their labour, are connected all thoſe filial, parental, and connubial affections, which contribute to the comfort of domeſtic life; all thoſe ſocial and political duties, which render civil community ſafe and eligible; all thoſe moral virtues, which form the only ſolid baſis of ſtrength and dignity to nations; in one word, all the principles and ſources of rational enjoyment to man in this world, and all the hopes and expectations of his ſpiritual happineſs in a future ſtate. DISC. VII.

DISCOURSE VIII.

False Philoſophy conſidered.

COL. ii. 8.

Beware leſt any Man ſpoil you through Philoſophy.

DISC. VIII.

ON men of ingenuous, but inexperienced minds, there is nothing ſo impoſing as a ſpecious name. To ſuch perſons, under the diſguiſe of an aſſumed appellation, vices recommend themſelves with ſo much ſucceſs, as to deceive the unwary into a confident opinion[a] that their conduct is proper,

[a] Cùm ſint vicina virtutibus vitia, etiam qui vitiis utuntur, virtutis tamen his nomen imponunt. QUINTIL. l. viii. c. iii. ſ. 1. This remark is equally true in a moral, as in a critical ſenſe.

although

although to judicious observers it appears palpably wrong. And this delusion continues to beguile them, till some unhappy consequence begins to create in them suspicions of error, and at length convinces them that they have been too long mistaken. In private life; some are brought into great distress, from having acted under an idea that inattention to pecuniary concerns was a mark of generosity. Others fall into vicious practices, because easy compliance with every proposal of a companion appears to them a proof of good temper. Others commit irregularities, through a persuasion that to despise the uniformity of rules is an indication of high spirit. Others violate the decencies of politeness, conceiving disregard to forms a sign of superior ability. Then again in public life; many do in reality serve the cause of licentiousness, whilst with the purest intentions they mean only to extend liberty: and many give encouragement to indifference for all religion, whilst they imagine themselves to be promoting only liberality of sentiment. Now in the one case,

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case, admirable are generosity, good temper, high spirit, and superior ability: but surely no man in his right senses can say it is admirable, either to bring on himself indigence through imprudent neglect of his property; or to become depraved through weakness in yielding to solicitations; or to injure society by bad example; or to insult established usages of behaviour by an affected impertinence. So in the other case, liberty is precious as life itself; and liberality in thinking and judging is part of Christian charity, than which nothing is more lovely: but surely no man of mature judgment can wish genuine liberty to be converted into a cloak for every species of enormity; nor liberality of sentiment be made the occasion of propagating direct atheism. Yet in these points of view are to be seen many measures, which upright but misguided men frequently pursue, merely becaufe they do not fully apprehend the tendencies of their actions.

Persons, therefore, who want experience, should be extremely cauticus how they depart from those principles, which have been received

received generally, because founded on solid reason; and how they deviate from those customs which have obtained long, because in their effect they have proved good. Thus circumspect should all persons be, who cannot yet have acquired much practical knowledge of the world; lest instead of becoming, what they anxiously wish to become, more beneficial to mankind than those who have preceded them, they should actually, though inadvertently, be instrumental towards occasioning some of the worst evils that can befal human society. DISC. VIII.

The present generation hath been injured by nothing, so much as by the imposing name of Philosophy. Philosophy, when it is employed in promoting good morals, in cultivating liberal arts, in strengthening social union, in contemplating the works of creation, and thus leading man to acknowledge and adore the Supreme Being, is a noble science: it is noble because true; and true, because consistent and corresponding with the nature of man, and with the relations he bears to his fellow-creatures and to

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his Maker! But that which *assumes* the name of Philosophy, and under this mask debauches morals, dissuades from mental improvement, disunites society, discerns not the wisdom of God either in the earth or the heavens, and discourages men from paying the tribute of gratitude to their universal Father; such a system of doctrines is detestable, because false; and false, because contrary to the nature of man, and his several relations to society and God. Real Philosophy we should cherish and love: it is the friend of man, being the source of wisdom, the origin of many comforts, and the handmaid of religion. That, which comes under its borrowed name; which puts on a semblance of what in fact it is not; and which if we are compelled to call Philosophy, we must, if we would speak properly, term False Philosophy; *that* is the evil against which we are to guard: and that the credulous and innocent may not be betrayed by the deceits, the forgeries, and inchantments of this vizored impos-

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stor[a], let us now enumerate some leading points in which this Philosophy is false. DISC. VIII.

1. It is false, in asserting that man in society retains all his natural rights. In exchange for the more certain subsistence, the more secure protection, the greater degree of assistance in times of sickness, or need, or casualty; in exchange for the delights of friendly intercourse, and the improvements of civilization; in exchange for these blessings which man enjoys in society; he relinquishes the savage liberty of roaming at large for prey, of exercising horrid vengeance on the person who has offended him, and of following without controul his ferocious and brutal passions, to the annoyance, disgrace, and destruction of his species.

2. It is false, in maintaining that all men are equal. In every point of view there is among men remarkable and unavoidable inequality. For neither have all men the same

[a] Hence with thy brew'd inchantments, foul deceiver;
Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence
With visor'd falsehood, and base forgery?
MILTON's Comus, 696.

stature,

DISC. VIII. stature, nor the same agility, nor the same strength, not the same sagacity; which are qualities chiefly valued by the barbarian; nor have all the same genius, nor the same industry, nor the same prudence; which are endowments excellent in civil society. From the disparity with which these bodily and mental faculties are distributed, through the natural operation of cause and effect men necessarily fall into inequality of condition, independently of all political distinctions. If moreover we consider man as intended for civil society, by such constitution of his nature he is designed for a state of inequality. For the very existence of society to any great extent, depends on order. But order requires that some should direct, and others be directed; which implies the subordination of inferiors to superiors.

3. It is false, in its presumptive and arrogant opinion that man is perfect. Whence originate the various enormities that disgrace human nature, and whence the necessity for establishing any laws to restrain vicious propensities, if man be perfect? The history of every

every society which has been known to institute such laws, is in direct contradiction to all ideas of human perfection, and too evidently demonstrates that man is imperfect. For all laws would be unnecessary if men were perfect; the necessity for them arises from our imperfection. Will it be said, that laws are the source of human depravity? That *some* laws may tend to corrupt man, will readily be allowed: but that *all* laws have such an effect, must positively be denied. The laws, for instance, which forbid me to murder, or steal, or commit adultery, or bear false witness, can never lead me to immorality. To affirm then, that because *some* laws may have a bad influence on morals, therefore *all* laws do thus operate, is to affirm what is false in fact; and it is moreover to argue from a *particular* instance to a *general* conclusion; which is false in reasoning. DISC. VIII.

Besides, to assert that laws, abstractedly and universally considered, are the source of human depravity, is to call *that* the cause, which in reality is but the effect; it is to

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speak as though laws had made men, and not men laws. Whereas the contrary is the truth: and if men have made laws against murder, theft, adultery, and other vices, they were compelled to make these provisions, by the experience they derived from observation of the human character, and by conviction that their fellow-creatures had actually committed such crimes.

4. It is false, in expecting that any human institution can be perfect. Can the body be sound, the limbs of which are unsound? or the waters sweet, the fountains of which are bitter? So neither can institutions framed by imperfect men be in all parts perfect. Every work of man must more or less bear signs of that imperfection, which is inseparable from the nature of its author.

5. It is false, in proposing to endanger an entire system, upon the *whole* beneficial, for the sake of improving a part, objectionable perhaps, but not injurious. Granting there may, and will be imperfections in all human institutions, yet where the good preponder-

ates, the evil is not so to be regarded, as that the former shall be hazarded for the *chance* of removing the latter. In the body natural, to hurt the vitals in order to heal the extremities, would be an act either of ignorance or of desperation. If in society there exist usages of acknowledged defect when considered abstractedly, but which from being counter-balanced by other circumstances are not prejudicial, and which cannot be changed without very material detriment to society itself; then to sacrifice the welfare of the community at large to considerations of partial advantage, would be repugnant to every principle of common prudence. DISC. VIII.

6. It is false, in conceiving that because the use of any thing is good, therefore the abuse of it must be also good. Freedom of action is good; but if that freedom be extended to subversion of all laws, in its excess it is not good. Freedom of speech is also good; but if it be carried beyond the bounds of decency, to slander and blasphemy, in its injurious and impious perversion it is not good.

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7. It is false, in supposing that the operation of the same principle should always proceed in the same direction. That man should enjoy civil and religious liberty is a virtuous principle, which should actuate the mind of every honest and religious person: and the maintainer of this principle will never support either despotism or persecution, because both are inconsistent with it. But neither, on the other hand, will he approve of endeavours, which under the sanction of civil liberty would contend for exemption from lawful authority; or which under the pretence of religious liberty would introduce atheism. For, in his conception, civil liberty is somewhat very different from the rejecting of all legal restraint whatever; and religious liberty somewhat very different from atheism, which has nothing to do with religion. Consistency with his principle, would require him to dissent, not only on the one hand from measures that were arbitrary, but also on the other from such as were licentious; both being equally dangerous to real liberty. His principle would continue the same; and the application of it would be

be with the same views; but the direction would vary as the case varies. The expert mariner throws his ballast on that side of the vessel, which wants its due proportion of burthen. The mechanic applies the weight to that side of the scale, where the equipoise is failing. The judicious commander supports that part of the army, which appears the weakest. The object of each, in his respective way, will be the same, and they will all act on the common principle of doing their best, as the nature of the case may happen to demand. DISC. VIII.

8. It is false, in denying the difference of things. By what means man obtains a general sense of right and wrong; whether from the constitution of his nature, as some conceive, or from education, as others maintain, it is needless to dispute: the fact is, that in civil society every one has that general sense [3]. And even the very persons,

[3] Who can doubt, whether mankind have been universally persuaded that there is a right and a wrong in human conduct? Some things, which in certain circumstances they ought to do, and other things which they ought not to do?

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perſons, who are moſt buſy in confounding good and evil, do nevertheleſs ſhew, when their intereſt is concerned, that they clearly diſcriminate the one from the other. For, the moſt diſhoneſt will rather truſt their perſons and property to a man of known integrity, than to one of ſuſpicious character: the reaſon is, they rely on the virtue of the former, but miſtruſt the fidelity of the latter. And this perſuaſion of placing confidence in the juſt, but of withholding it from the unjuſt, operates univerſally throughout mankind, and plainly proves that in the common concerns of life, the difference of right and wrong not only *may* be diſtinguiſhed, but actually *is* diſcerned, and applied as a direction for proper conduct in the prudent management of temporal affairs.

The univerſality of theſe opinions, and of many others that might be named, is ſufficiently evident, from the whole tenour of men's conduct, as far as our acquaintance reaches; and from the records of hiſtory, in all ages and nations, that are tranſmitted to us.

Dr. REID on the Intellectual Powers of Man, Eſſay 1. c. ii. p. 44. ed. 1785.

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This power of discriminating between right and wrong, between good and evil, may however be proved by an instance of a kind more generous, than that of regard to self-interest. Whence is it, that on reviewing the lives of men who for ages past have ceased to exist, as their history proceeds, our minds imperceptibly annex to their actions either approbation or censure unpremeditated and spontaneous[4]? We admire the just and humane, like Titus: we abhor the oppressive and cruel, like Domitian. The unerring judgment we thus pass is the effect of a distinguishing principle in man's nature; a principle which, however dormant or perverted it may be in a savage people, hath nevertheless been always prompt in perceiving and right in deciding, amongst men living in that state, where *alone* the human faculties and qualities can be seen in perfection, the state of civilization. DISC. VIII.

But if we have within us a principle thus capable of discriminating between good and

[4] See "Inquiry concerning Moral Good and Evil," by Hutcheson. Treatise ii. s. 1, 2.

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evil, and if that principle doth so discriminate, then that there should be some things good and some evil, and that there should be a difference between them, is a necessary consequence.

Another argument to the same purpose arises from considering that indignation[5], which persons who in general perhaps are not very solicitous respecting their character, do nevertheless shew when charged with crimes of which they are innocent. And

[5] An illustration of this remark occurs in vol. ii. b. 1. c. 10. "Voyages to the South Sea," published by HAWKESWORTH in 1773. TUBOURAI TAMAIDE, an Otahitean, had been falsely suspected of stealing a knife, which in reality had been taken care of by Mr. Banks's servant. When the innocence of the Otahitean appeared, he expressed the emotions of his mind in his looks and gestures, and "with a countenance that severely reproached "Mr. Banks with his suspicions."

On this incident it is observed, "These people have a "knowledge of right and wrong from the mere dictates of "natural conscience; and involuntarily condemn themselves, when they do that to others, which they would "condemn others for doing to them. That TUBOURAI "TAMAIDE felt the force of moral obligation, is certain; "for the imputation of an action which he considered as "indifferent, would not, when it appeared to be groundless, have moved him with such excess of passion."

this

this anger is not the consequence of cool re- DISC. VIII.
flection; and therefore cannot be said to be the effect of fear lest punishment should ensue: it is the instantaneous and involuntary impulse of the mind, which is exasperated at the idea of having been thought guilty in a base act, and resents the injustice of a suspicion not merited. Here indeed is a double proof of power to discern right and wrong: for the person thus accused, by his being irritated at a false charge, immediately discovers that he distinguishes moral evil from moral good; and by his feeling pain under an accusation not deserved, he manifests how perfectly he understands whether he is treated justly or unjustly by others.

There is then a difference in things; and commonly speaking, it is clear to the apprehension of all men.

9. It is false, in teaching to do evil that good may come of it; or in other words, that the end sanctifies the means. In this country it will scarcely be denied, that every one who lives in society has a claim on that society for justice and protection. But if it be

DISC. VIII. be an allowed maxim, that men may do evil[6] for the production of ſome good, then it will not be improbable (becauſe the caſe has happened) that ſome perſons under the deluſion of this principle may, with a view to ſome imaginary good, not only refuſe you juſtice, but proceed to treat you with the groſſeſt injuſtice; may firſt plunder your property, and then deprive you of life, though on your part no offence hath been committed againſt either law or equity. Where then would be that ſecurity of rights, which from ſociety you are encouraged to expect, and warranted in demanding?

Again; the baſis of civil ſociety is mutual confidence. But what man of common prudence will commit either his property or his perſon to the care of another, who holds himſelf at liberty to betray his truſt and even deſtroy his friend, provided he doth but intend to appropriate the ſpoils to ſome good purpoſe?

[6] A right to do wrong, or to commit injuſtice, is an abuſe of language, and a contradiction in terms.

Dr. FERGUSON on Civil Society, P. 1. ſ. 10. p. 106. ed. 1773.

Thus

Thus then this principle goes to the dis- DISC. VIII.
solution of all society; and if so, must be rejected as not compatible or reconcileable with that state, for which man is intended, and in which, when duly constituted, he finds the greater portion of happiness.

But in vindication of this perverse paradox, the public good of society has been pretended. It would however be difficult, nay even impossible to shew, that it can be for the public good of society to defeat the very cause, and counteract the very ends for which all society is instituted; both which evils this paradox completely works, by banishing confidence, and by violating at pleasure, the rights of the society existing.

But its advocate then pleads the good of posterity. Whose posterity? By the sudden death of those, whom this maxim may have taken off, he has done his utmost that they shall have no posterity: and by holding out an example to his own posterity, that they may do evil to produce good, he has taught them to rob and destroy each other, as he has robbed and destroyed the men of his own generation. For, what was once in itself lawful,

DISC. VIII. lawful, must always be lawful: if robbery and assassination be lawful to the maintainer of this principle, they will be lawful to his children. And thus by precedent he establishes a maxim which, pursued to its consequences, would tend to the utter extinction of all society.

Seen then in these points of view, the paradox of doing evil that good may come of it, is of all others the most mischievous [7] that ever entered the mind of man.

Sophistry may puzzle plain sense; and violence may compel the oppressed to submit: but in common apprehension, honesty and fact, this is the truth; that if men choose to continue members of society, they are bound to acquiesce in those first principles, on which alone society *can* be so formed as to answer the ends of its institution. These principles are; 1st. That no man is allowed knowingly and wilfully to do wrong unto another; 2d. That every thing is wrong which is unjust; 3d. That every

[7] "No end can justify the sacrifice of a principle, nor "was a crime ever necessary in the course of human affairs." Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo, vol. ii. p. 307. ed. 1795.

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thing is unjust, which will produce more harm than benefit to the person affected. Where such principles are established, we have grounds of confidence on which we may securely rest; but should the other maxim prevail, on *whom* or on *what* could we depend? DISC. VIII.

10. It is false, in asserting that men are not required to be just in public life, as they are in private.

Society cannot exist to any useful purpose without mutual confidence, nor mutual confidence without the uniform prevalence of truth and justice. Therefore, though in intercourse with the world there may arise many cases, in which it may be difficult to ascertain precisely on which side truth and justice should lead us to determine, yet from *intending* and *endeavouring* to follow the spirit of these principles, no man is in any case exempt: and for this reason, *viz.* because no man, living in society, can in any case be exempt from discharging a social duty to which he is competent; and a social duty it is, incumbent on every person alike, whether he be retired, or whether he concern

DISC. VIII. cern himself with public affairs, to do his utmost for the conservation of society; which end can be attained *only* by adhering to truth and justice, since they are the foundations of confidence, that basis of civil union.

The same reasoning, which applies to the individual in society, applies also to the society itself with respect to alliance. Where there is no confidence between one nation and another, there can be no alliance; and where truth and justice are wantonly violated, there can be no confidence. Therefore nations, if they wish and profess to make alliance, and of course political administrators of such nations, are bound to observe such conduct towards their allies, as to the party with whom they have contracted alliance, may be serviceable to the ends for which the alliance was contracted, and may be perfectly consistent with equity and good faith [a].

[a] The learned Reader will recollect the upright conduct of Aristides, when it was proposed by Themistocles to burn the fleet of the allied Greeks.

See PLUTARCH. THEMISTOCLES, p. 269. vol. i. Bryan's edition.

National

National safety, national duty, and national character require this conduct. DISC. VIII.

11. It is false, in conceiving that experiments may be made in morals, as in physics.

Natural and moral philosophy work not on the same subjects: the one is employed on matter; the other on mind. The effects of experiment on matter may be infinite as the particles of matter, and therefore incalculable: but the effects of experiment in moral principles applied to the human mind are comparatively few, and therefore can be ascertained. Such effects are few, because human nature is universally constituted of the same passions: and those effects can easily be ascertained, because every kind of principle, both consistent and inconsistent with man's nature, hath been already and long since tried, and the consequences are recorded. And it is impossible now to conceive any moral principle, the effect of which might not be foreseen; because, nothing *new* in morals can be devised; and as for the operation of principles *already known* (which indeed are all that can be discovered)

DISC. VIII. discovered) it has always been found that men influenced by similar principles and placed in similar situations act nearly in the same[9] manner; and that certain moral causes will produce certain corresponding moral effects. The attempt therefore to introduce new moral principles in a highly polished and civilized people, is extravagant and wild, because vain and fruitless.

But the extravagance and wildness of the attempt are among the slightest causes that render it objectionable. If the business terminated only in folly, there were in it little danger to be apprehended. It leads how-

[9] See Dr. FERGUSON on Civil Society, p. 1. s. i.

We have every reason to believe, that in the case of such an experiment made, we shall suppose, with a colony of children transplanted from the nursery, and left to form a society apart, untaught, and undisciplined, we should only have the same things repeated, which, in so many different parts of the earth, have been transacted already. P. 6. ed. 1773.

See also Dr. REID on the Intellectual Powers, &c. Ess. 1, c. iv. p. 53. The constitution of human nature is so similar in different societies or commonwealths, that the causes of peace and war, of tranquillity and sedition, of riches and poverty, of improvement and degeneracy, are much the same in all.

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ever to most fatal consequences: for, it en- DISS. VIII.
courages men to act in contradiction to those relations, which they bear to society. Does it not, for instance, contradict such relations to assert, that every one has a right to all he can obtain by strength or power, in contempt of law? Yet this doctrine has been more than once propagated, and (what is still worse) has been made a principle of action the force of which has been carried into immediate effect.

12. It is false, in teaching men, to obey the impulse of passion, rather than the dictates of reason. It is clearly man's duty to follow, by virtuous means, that which shall ultimately terminate in the greatest natural and moral good. The two springs of human action are reason and passion. Now any one passion unrestrained by reason, will in the end produce injury. Thus, hope may lead to credulity, which in matters of business may occasion ruin: Fear may unnerve a man against impending danger: Anger may precipitate him into madness: Desire may plunge him into sen-

DISC. VIII. ſual vices. Reaſon is the faculty, by which theſe and all paſſions are reſtrained from running into exceſs. But if ſo, it is the power which ought to direct man's conduct, becauſe it will prevent him from incurring thoſe evils, into which the paſſions might plunge him; and becauſe reaſon itſelf can lead to no evils, ſo long as it retains its eſſential nature, that of judging rightly. If once we begin to judge not rightly, we are then proceeding, not according to the dictates of reaſon, but the deluſions of error.

13. It is falſe, in aſſerting that man is merely material. Man thinks: Matter does not [10] think. Man has ſelf-will and ſelf-motion: Matter has neither. Man therefore muſt be conſtituted of *ſomething* very different and diſtinct from matter, and *that* is what we call mind. Should it in reply be ſaid, God *may*, if He chooſes, make matter capable of thinking, of willing, and of moving;

[10] There is indeed nothing more ridiculous than to imagine, that any motion or modification of matter ſhould produce thought. Dr. REID's Intellectual Powers, Eſſ. 2. c. iv. p. 95.

ing; the answer is, first, that to overlook what God *has* done, and argue from what He *may* do, is to reject [11] experience for speculation and substitute theory for facts, which is a vicious mode of reasoning: and in the next place, it is to introduce confusion of terms; for if matter were made capable of thinking, willing, and moving, it would be no longer matter, it would be something very different from it, because it would have properties which no combination or division of matter was ever known [12] to produce. If the essential properties of any thing be altered, it becomes in its nature new; and so the case would be with respect to matter. DISC. VIII.

[11] Certè contra experimentorum tenorem somnia temerè confingenda non sunt, nec a naturæ analogiâ recedendum est, cùm ea simplex esse soleat, et sibi semper consona.

NEWTONI Principia, l. 3. R. 3.

Quicquid ex phænomenis non deducitur, *hypothesis* vocanda est; et hypotheses seu metaphysicæ, seu physicæ, seu qualitatum occultarum, seu mechanicæ, in philosophiâ experimentali locum non habent.

Ibid. l. 3. Schol. Generale.

[12] He (Dr. Hartley) even acknowledges that matter and motion, however subtilly divided or reasoned upon, yield nothing more than matter and motion still.

Dr. REID's Intellect. Powers, Ess. 2. c. iii. p. 90.

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14. It is false, in supposing that nothing is to be admitted as true, which is not capable of mathematical demonstration. It is contrary to the condition of man to require mathematical demonstration in all cases [13], before we assent to the truth of them. For, the concerns of life could not be carried on, if we did not rely on the word [14] of each other for facts done at present: and we must remain in total ignorance of circumstances past, if we did not admit the evidence of historical testimony. But neither the assertions of men living, nor the evidence of historical testimony amount to mathematical demonstration, although, when the persons speaking or writing cannot reasonably be suspected of falsehood, their statements do amount to moral certainty. With reliance however on this certainty, though short of demonstration, we daily act, and on every principle of reason are justi-

[13] It is a common observation, that it is unreasonable to require demonstration for things which do not admit of it.
Dr. REID's Intellect. Powers, Ess. 7. c. iii. p. 690.

[14] See Bishop SHERLOCK's Disc. II. vol. iv. p. 282. ed. 1764.

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fied [15] both in thus acting, and in believing facts, which happened in ages antecedent to that in which we now exist. DISC. VIII.

15. It is false, in opposing speculative objections to positive facts.

In natural religion, it is a fact that God hath given us life, and various means of enjoying life. This is a proof of God's goodness. It is a fact also, that He hath made the sun, moon, stars, earth, and waters, and fitted them for many useful purposes. These prove the wisdom [16] and the power

[15] Things of several kinds may admit and require several sorts of proofs, all which may be good in their kind.

When a thing is capable of good proof in any kind, men ought to rest satisfied in the best evidence for it, which that kind of things will bear, and beyond which better could not be expected, supposing it were true.

'Tis sufficient that matters of faith and religion be propounded in such a way, as to render them highly credible, so as an honest and teachable man may willingly and safely assent to them, and according to the rules of prudence be justified in so doing.

Bp. WILKINS's "Principles of Natural Religion," B. i. c. iii. s. 2, 3. 5.

See ibid. B. ii. c. ix. p. 408. edit. 1675.

[16] Elegantissima hæcce solis, planetarum et cometarum compages non nisi consilio et dominio entis intelligentis et potentis oriri potuit.

NEWTONI Principia, l. iii. Generale Scholium.

DISC. VIII. of God. All objections then which can poſſibly be raiſed, taken from imperfections imaginary or real in the works of creation, can never *diſprove* that God is benevolent, wiſe, and powerful. The utmoſt avail of ſuch objections can only be a ſuppoſition that He might have been *more*[17] benevolent, and have ſhewn *greater* marks of wiſdom and power. But who can undertake to demonſtrate ſuch a preſumptuous ſuppoſition, when he cannot know thoroughly even this our own ſyſtem, which is but one part of the univerſe? On the other hand, reaſon can produce many arguments, which ſhould convince us *all is for the beſt*[18], according to the

[17] The objection only ſhews, if it ſhew any thing, that we can *conceive* a conſtitution of things, in which *greater* benevolence would have appeared: a concluſion with which we have at preſent no concern.

The arguments, by which we prove the Divine benevolence to a certain degree, are not overturned by objecting, that a *greater* degree is conceivable. I am now arguing on the very unreaſonable ſuppoſition, that human conception is the meaſure of Divine power.

See Dr. BALGUY on Divine Benevolence, p. 32 and 73.

[18] Cujus quidem adminiſtratio nihil habet in ſe quod reprehendi poſſit: ex iis enim naturis quæ erant, quod effici *optimum*

the *present* constitution of the world, and the *present* state of existence. DISC. VIII.

Again; In revealed religion, that Christ rose from the dead is a fact, attested more strongly than any other fact recorded in ancient history. All objections then, which can possibly be made against his doctrines, can never disprove this fact; and on this it is we rest our faith.

16. It is false, in dissembling the difficulties which attend infidelity.

In natural religion, it is much more difficult to believe, that the world, formed as it is with design and governed with regularity, should be made and preserved by *chance*, i. e. *by nothing*, than it is to believe that it was

optimum potuit, effectum est. CIC. de Nat. Deor. l. ii. c. 34. quoted by Dr. BALGUY, p. 74. "Divine Benevolence."

See also THOMPSON'S SUMMER, v. 318.

Let no presuming impious railer tax
CREATIVE WISDOM, as if ought was form'd
In vain, or not for admirable ends.
Shall little haughty ignorance pronounce
His works unwise, of which the smallest part
Exceeds the narrow vision of her mind?

DISC. VIII. made and governed by an Intelligent Being competent to the effecting of so stupendous a work.

In revealed religion, it is much more difficult to believe, that Christianity arose from *no certain* ground, than it is to believe that Christ really and actually existed. For to what adequate cause but such existence can it be ascribed, that his life is recorded by four histories, for the country and æra of which we have strong presumptive proof from their style [19] and correspondence with the circumstances of their time; and for the writers of which we have testimonies from the age immediately subsequent to them: to what other cause can it be ascribed that his doctrines should be the subject of many epistles, which by striking coincidences [20] of time and place, and minute particulars, bear singular characters of authenticity; and that passages should be cited from those histories and epistles, and allusions made to

[19] See MICHAELIS's Introduction to the Four Gospels, translated by MARSH, sect. 10, 11. 7, 8. in chapter 1.

[20] See Archdeacon's PALEY's "Horæ Paulinæ."

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them by many authors, who are known to have written at the distance of at least sixteen hundred years from the present date: to what other cause can it be ascribed, that in a vast empire idolatry should have yielded to the establishment of his religion; that many nations have made his principles the basis of their legislation; that for seventeen centuries there has been a succession of men professing themselves his disciples, and that at this day in several countries, civilized and enlightened, is observed a solemn ceremony in commemoration of his death: to what other cause *can* all these effects be ascribed, but to the sole cause which is adequate to account for them, *viz.* the real and actual existence of Christ? Surely it is beyond comparison more difficult to believe that those notorious and extraordinary facts should rest on no other foundation but fiction, than it is to believe that Christ lived, died, and rose again, in the manner related of Him by the Evangelists and Apostles. DISC. VIII.

17. It is false, in confounding remote consequences with primary qualities. Thus, the

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the religious wars, which have been carried on by Christians, it charges on Christianity. Now it is incontrovertible, that the language of Christianity, as found in the Gospels, speaks nothing but peace; and that the spirit of Christianity is so benevolent, as to forbid all unjust aggression, and to allow resistance and repulsion of injury so far only, as in self-protection may be prudent and necessary. If then the professors of Christianity have used violence where no danger threatened them, or have propagated their principles of faith by means of cruelty and persecution, the criminality of such proceedings must be imputed, not to Christianity itself, but to the professors of it; who were influenced either by mistaken judgment, or misguided zeal, or ambition, or pride, or avarice, or some other malignant passion, which imposed itself on them under the name and appearance of conscience. To charge on Christianity, which in itself is good, either the errors or the vices of the persons who do indeed embrace, but who also pervert, or disobey it, is so palpable an instance of arguing from *abuse*,

abuse, as no just reasoning can possibly admit. And equally unfair is it to blame Christianity for the consequences that ensue from the corruption of its doctrines and the neglect of its positive precepts, as it were to blame jurisprudence, because many have been ruined by legal chicane; or medicine, because the deaths of many have been hastened by empiricism; or literature, because men, who have turned their abilities to the vilest of purposes, have written against every thing that is praise-worthy and sacred before God and man; or commerce, because the supplies which it administers to our wants, are employed to pamper the appetite of luxury and to swell the riot of excess. If either Christianity, or jurisprudence, or medicine, or literature, or commerce, has been made a pretended ground for the introduction of evil, such pretence has been in open contradiction to what was first intended in the cultivation of them; and the mischief is chargeable, not on them, which in themselves are good, and which in their original tendencies lead to good; but either on the DISC. VIII.

DISC. VIII. folly, or the wickedneſs of men, who have perverted the nature of theſe bleſſings, and have directed them to improper ends[21]. Surely the clearneſs of the fountain is not affected, becauſe its ſtream at a remote diſtance is diſcoloured by the ſoil over which it flows: nor is the light of the ſun *therefore* not bright, becauſe on earth we may behold it through ſome dark body interpoſed between our eye and the ſource of effulgence.

But farther; it is diſingenuous in ſuppreſſing this fact, *viz.* that for the thouſands, who may have ſuffered in wars termed holy, millions have lived in more undiſturbed enjoyment of their property, in ſafer protection of their perſons, in ſtricter purity of morals, in more uniform practice of private and domeſtic virtues, of ſocial and public duties, under the benign and vital influence of Chriſtianity, than under any other ſyſtem of religion, or avowal of irreligion, that can be named. In no country

[21] See Dr. RYAN's "Hiſtory of the Effects of Religion on Mankind," vol. ii. ſ. 7.

not

not Christian, are there so many instances of good effects resulting from any other cause whatever, as are found to arise in nations that are Christian, from the impressions made directly and indirectly by Christianity, operating as it does on our laws, our sentiments, our manners, and our habits. Say then, shall we relinquish the religion of the Gospel, and instead of it adopt either the loose indifference of scepticism, or the pitiable uncertainties of deism, or the unbounded sensuality of Mahometanism, or the degrading idolatries of those who worship Brama, or Foi; or shall we rush precipitately into that atheism, which at once throws off all restraint on the passions, disregards all maxims of equity, dissolves all the ties of social connexion, steels the heart against the fine feelings of humanity, sheds human blood without a pang of remorse, and makes man to man a creature more savage than any beast of the forest is to one of its own species? But these are the persuasions on religious subjects, which prevail in the nations most important on the face

DISC. VIII.

DISC. VIII. face of the earth: say then, shall we in exchange for any one of these, or for any of the cruel and absurd rites in the islands of the Southern[22] Ocean, resign the rational, sober, mild, and merciful doctrines of Evangelical Christianity? That so dire infatuation may never possess our minds, let us earnestly endeavour, as we value the dignity and happiness of human nature.

18. It is false, in excluding Divine Providence from the government[23] of the world.

It is the first property of matter to be inactive. The planets are material, but do nevertheless perform their periodical revolutions. There must then have been originally some power, independent[24] of the planets themselves, which communicated to

[22] See Chap. ix. b. iii. vol. 2. of "A Voyage to the "Pacific Ocean," by CAPTAIN COOK, in 1776, 1777, &c.

[23] Deus enim fine dominio, providentia, et causis finalibus, nihil aliud est quàm fatum et natura.

NEWTONI Principia, l. 3. Scholium Gener.

[24] See DERHAM's Astro-Theology, b. iv. c. 1.

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them their primary motion; and that power is the effect of Divine Providence. DISC. VIII.

Again; Man hath no power to command that the earth shall produce and the seasons mature the various fruits on which he subsists. But there is a Power independent of man, independent of the earth and seasons, which through means of the earth and seasons doth furnish him with abundance of all supplies that either necessity may crave or luxury desire. The exercise of that power is a manifestation of providence in Him, by whom it is exercised.

The life of man depends so much on the perfect state of many minute parts in the human frame, that it might be shortened by obstructions in several vesicles. These obstructions and other injuries it is not in the power of man to avert; but there is a Power independent of man, which doth avert them. This then is a demonstration of a particular Providence over each individual.

Again;

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Again; Though in the common affairs of the world there is such a degree of correspondence[25] between the means and the end, as to justify and encourage us in adopting certain measures for the accomplishing of certain purposes, yet on various occasions we find effects in no way answering to visible causes. The wisdom of man is baffled; his counsels are frustrated; his efforts prove abortive: and yet, so far as human prudence could judge, the designs were calculated for ensuring success in the enterprise undertaken. But there is a Power, that over-rules all human endeavours; that often produces a consequence

[25] Established laws of nature are necessary for enabling intelligent creatures to conduct their affairs with wisdom and prudence, and prosecute their ends by proper means; but still it may be fit, that some particular events should not be fixed by general laws, but be directed by particular acts of the Divine government, that so his reasonable creatures may have sufficient inducement to supplicate his aid, his protection and direction, and to depend upon Him for the success of their honest designs.

See Dr. REID on the "Active Powers of Man," Ess. 4. c. ix. p. 338. edit. 1788.

See ibid. p. 345.

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diametrically opposite to what was expected; that is particularly discernible in its benign operations to educe[16] good from what seemed to threaten evil: all which exertions of power are farther demonstrations of providence applied by some Being, who is far above all that man can behold or comprehend. DISC. VIII.

Of a superintending providence these are evidences direct, which no subtleties of dispute can possibly overthrow, so far as the facts themselves extend. Instances of cases that may *appear* to contradict, could not invalidate facts which *positively prove*, the exercise of Providence. The utmost, which such instances could do, would be to furnish a *specious* argument for *supposing* only that the operations of Providence might be *more* wide: they never could shew its operations to be altogether non-existent, so far as facts prove them actually to exist. But

[16] ——— I cannot go
Where UNIVERSAL LOVE not smiles around,
Sustaining all yon orbs and all their sons;
From *seeming evil* still educing *good*.
THOMPSON'S HYMN.

DISC. VIII. is man then so acquainted with the *whole* system of Divine administration, that he cannot possibly labour under any *misconceptions*, when he passes censure on *parts* of it? Can he undertake to demonstrate that what in *one* respect may have the *appearance* of casualty, *cannot* possibly in *many other* respects have all the marks of final design? Yet, until man can prove, that any arrangement in the dispensations of God to this world, is either in itself nugatory, or in all its relations inadequate and improper for the purpose it is to serve, he is not better qualified to pronounce *this* or *that* event repugnant to ideas of Providence, than a child is enabled to pronounce *this* or *that* action of his parent repugnant to discretion.

19. It is false, in conceiving it no part of man's duty to make *open profession*[27] that he believes there is a God.

Not to *profess* that we believe there is a God, is in effect either to deny or to dissem-

[27] See Bp. SHERLOCK's Discourse XVI. vol. 3. p. 368. edit. 1764.

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ble that God is our Creator and Preserver. But reason can prove such denial contrary to fact: and such dissimulation is irreconcileable with the gratitude, which enforces thankfulness from the creature to his Creator; with the reverence, which an Almighty Being can claim [25] from one who is dependent on Him; and with that love, which should prompt every mind of right dispositions, openly and incessantly to extol Him, to whom it is indebted for so many blessings. Add to this, that he who doth not himself *profess* to believe there is a God, influences others, so far as his example has any weight, to act in the same manner: and thus he is instrumental towards what we have already proved contradictory to right reason, the exclusion of DISC. VIII.

[25] Hic omnia regit, non ut anima mundi, sed ut universorum Dominus; et propter dominium suum Dominus Deus παντοκρατωρ dici solet. Nam Deus est vox relativa et ad servos refertur: et *Deitas* est dominatio Dei non in corpus proprium (ut sentiunt quibus Deus est anima mundi) sed in servos. NEWTONI Principia, L. 3. Scholium Generale.

DISC. VIII. God and his providence from the government of the universe.

20. It is false, in discouraging religious worship. For, by so doing it acts in contradiction to that gratitude, which on a principle of moral obligation, is due from man, who receives, to God, who confers so many and so great benefits; and inconsistently with that prudence, which directs all, who desire a continuance of blessings, to supplicate the Giver of them for such continuance. Then again, it is in opposition both to the nature of man, who is made capable of religious sentiments indisputably [29] for religious purposes; and in opposition also to the general consent of mankind, the history of which through all ages, in situations where the mental faculties have been duly improved, shews men to have always agreed in the propriety of observing *some* religious usages, however

[29] *Indisputably*; for it is an allowed axiom that Nature, *i. e.* God, does nothing in vain. Dicunt utique philosophi, Natura nihil agit frustra.

NEWTONI Principia, L. 3. Reg. 1. Philosoph.

different

different may have been their opinions as to the particular modes of worship they would adopt. Add to this, that neglect of religion tends to impair the most energetic of all motives to the practice of private virtue; by weakening which, and by diminishing private virtue, it leads ultimately to the corruption of public morals; from which corruption proceeds decay of public good, so far as that term implies order, industry, valour, honour, and genuine freedom; qualities which are productive of the greatest glory and of the highest happiness to any nation. DISC. VIII.

21. It is false, in denying the soul's immortality. For, first it takes for granted what never can be proved, that man is altogether material; which is an arbitrary assumption. Secondly; the assumption itself is false; because it is known that man has properties of thinking, willing, and moving, which belong not to matter, and therefore man must be constituted of something very different from matter. Thirdly, it is presuming on more than the doc-

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trine of chances would allow; for, as we *do* exist in this state, it is at least an *even* chance that we *may* exist in another. Fourthly, it contradicts the apprehensions of the human mind, which on the commission of a crime against morality, anticipates the rendering of an account to an invisible Being. Fifthly, it is repugnant to the general expectation of mankind. Whether that expectation be the result of tradition, or of reason, or of some peculiar principle in the constitution of man, is nothing to the purpose; the fact is, expectation of a future state has universally and through all ages prevailed. Sixthly, it is prejudicial to the interests of mankind, as it tends to exterminate a doctrine of the greatest moral utility, the doctrine of future retribution. Seventhly, it is irreconcileable with the moral attributes of the Deity; for it takes away that, which, if allowed, at once removes [30] all objections to

[30] Allow only the present life to be connected with a better, and every objection to Divine benevolence ceases of course. Is it not then more reasonable to admit and main-

to the wisdom and goodness of God in the disc. VIII. dispensations of his providence, objections raised on the supposed or real existence of partial evil. Thus much even natural religion could answer: but Revelation speaks more confidently, and says assuredly there shall be a resurrection of the just and the unjust.

Between the revelation which asserts, and the philosophy which denies the soul's immortality, there is this striking difference: the former rests all its doctrines on the truth of certain facts; the latter can proceed only on conjecture: of course the one is as much more deserving of credit than the other, as experimental knowledge is a more sure guide than speculative theory.

22. It is false, in disclaiming Divine assistance to the human mind.

maintain this connexion, than to oppose our visionary difficulties (founded, for the most part, on the narrowness of our views, and the obscurity of our conceptions) to those innumerable marks of wisdom and goodness, which shine forth through the whole creation?

Dr. Balguy's Divine Benevolence, p. 102.

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The strength of his body and the faculties of his mind man derives originally from God. Whether he receives them *immediately* from his Maker, or through the intervention of second causes, the case is the same in effect, for he must in either case alike refer it utimately to God. The talents then, which in vague and indistinct language we call *natural* endowments are the gift of God; and they are bestowed in degrees which differ[21] exceedingly, not only in different persons, but at different times in the same person. This diversity proceeds very frequently not from any concurrence of the human will, nor from the apparent operation of any physical cause: it results from the energy of some power, which man

[21] It ought likewise to be observed, that as active power in man, and in every created being, is the gift of God, it depends entirely on his pleasure for its existence, its degree, and its continuance, and therefore can do nothing which He does not see fit to permit.

Dr. REID on the "Active Powers of Man." Ess. 4. c. v. p. 310.

can neither ſee, explain, nor command; that power which we term Divine. DISC. VIII.

The eſſence of Divine power is to work *all* things not implying a contradiction [22]. As it confers ability to the mind in one degree, it may confer the ſame to degrees infinite; it may increaſe and ſtrengthen the moral faculties in any meaſure whatever; for being omnipotent in its nature, it can experience no other reſtraint than what to the Supreme Being, in whom it reſides, may ſeem expedient. Thus then it is evident, that if it be the *will* of God to grant Divine aſſiſtance to the human mind, He certainly hath the *power* to grant ſuch aid.

That He ſhould have the *will*, may be conceived from his attributes: for, being himſelf both juſt and holy, He cannot but *will* that his rational creatures ſhould be juſt and holy; and being alſo good and benevolent, He cannot but be inclined

[22] —— Contradiction, which to God himſelf
Impoſſible is held, as argument
Of weakneſs, not of power.
MILTON's Par. L. x. 799.

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DISC. VIII. through his goodneſs and benevolence to help thoſe, who *would* be juſt and holy, but who if left to the mere ſtrength of their own reſolution, cannot through their infirmity execute the virtuous and pious deſigns, which in truth and ſincerity their minds purpoſe.

That God then hath the *power* to aſſiſt the human mind, is incontrovertible: and that He ſhould have the *will*, may from his attributes fairly be concluded. It remains to be conſidered whether He actually doth aſſiſt the human mind? And here we have much ſtronger reaſons for affirming, than for denying the queſtion. For in affirming it, we are juſtified by having proved that God *certainly* is able, and *moſt probably* is willing to grant aſſiſtance; and we moreover have on our part this circumſtance, *viz.* that no reaſoning of man can poſſibly ever diſprove our aſſertion, when we maintain that God does aſſiſt us. On the other hand thoſe, who diſclaim Divine aſſiſtance, argue in contradiction to what God *certainly can* and *probably does* effect, and

and set up their own bare assertion as sufficient to prove, that God does *not* assist the human mind. But what man is competent to decide thus peremptorily that God does *not* assist our minds? What finite being can take upon himself to declare all the ways and operations of a Being Infinite? DISC. VIII.

The disclaiming then of Divine assistance being contrary to the nature of man, who receives *all* his faculties from God; and irreconcileable with the attributes which dispose God to love holiness and to help those who desire to be holy; as moreover it proceeds on an assumption, which neither argument nor fact can ever support to such an extent as to prove that Divine assistance is *not* communicated to man; the position is to be given up as not founded on any reasoning admissible in sound philosophy.

23. It is false, in teaching men to think it a matter of indifference, whether they hold right or wrong opinions.

Having received from his Maker, for *good* purposes, a mind as well as a body, man is equally bound to make a proper use of

DISC. VIII. of both: and he is alike culpable, whether he knowingly and wilfully contracts intellectual or bodily vices. But wrong opinions are intellectual [33] vices: and so far as our will is concerned, either in neglecting [34] to search for truth, or in disqualifying the mind for perceiving it, or in resisting the force of it when perceived; so far our wrong opinions are chargeable on us as crimes, because they proceed from an abuse of those powers, which were intended to help us in forming a right judgment, and which would have led us to just conclusions, unless through our own fault.

[33] The neglect of keeping our minds in such an equal frame, the not applying of our thoughts to consider of such matters of moment, as do highly concern a man to be rightly informed in, must needs be a vice.

Bp. WILKINS's Principles, &c. l. 1. 3. 6.

[34] The man, who neglects the means of improvement in the knowledge of his duty, may do very bad things, while he follows the light of his mind. And though he be not culpable for acting according to his judgment, he may be very culpable for not using the means of having his judgment better informed.

Dr. REID on the "Active Powers of Man," Ess. 3. c. viii. p. 256. ed. 1788.

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It may farther be remarked, that as opinions are commonly the principles of action, and it cannot be matter of indifference whether men act right or wrong; so neither can it be indifferent whether their opinions be right or wrong; for, as they think, so in general they act. It is therefore of great consequence that we form right opinions. DISC. VIII.

What opinions *are right*, we may now easily collect, from the observations which have been made on those that are erroneous. We will briefly state them.

Man, living in society, is subject to restraints; but in return, is entitled to protection of his property, his freedom, and his person. To this protection all who have not, by transgressing the laws, forfeited the benefit of them, have an equal claim: but equality of condition in rank and fortune cannot possibly exist.

The passions of some men would prompt them to violate the rights of others, were they not restricted by laws: hence laws are requisite. But perfection in those laws cannot practically be found, to that degree which

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which speculatively might be wished. Nor ought it to be expected; because, the framers of them are themselves imperfect; and as such, can neither make provisions for all the cases that may possibly require legislative consideration; nor can they foresee all the various ways, in which the provisions they do make may possibly operate. Particular laws relating to particular circumstances and individual persons, may be readily amended as occasion makes it necessary: but with respect to a complicated system, that embraces a large community, and where consequences of great moment would proceed from alteration, sufficient it is if laws *upon the whole* are as good as circumstances will admit. When such they are, a change of them is not capriciously and precipitately to be attempted; more especially if in the attempt we hazard the losing of what is confessedly good, and have reason to fear the adopting of what eventually may prove extremely pernicious.

Of those privileges, which we claim under the law, the perversion is criminal; and concern

concern for the general welfare requires the checking of ſuch perverſion; leſt thoſe who obſerve the laws ſhould ultimately be deprived of their privileges; which would be the caſe, not only if the governing power ſhould exceed the due meaſure of authority; but equally ſo, if there ſhould prevail an intemperate miſapplication of liberty to bad purpoſes. DISC. VIII.

The end of law is juſtice. The idea of juſtice ariſes from a preſumption that ſomething is in itſelf *right* and ſomething *wrong*. No circumſtances can warrant the intentional commiſſion of *wrong*; becauſe the obſerving of *right* is our duty both in private and public life. The truth of theſe ſentiments is proved by the ſalutary influence of them in the hiſtory of mankind through all ages: they are not therefore to be abandoned for ſpeculative extravagances, deſtructive to man; nor is man allowed to ſacrifice the dictates of reaſon to the violence of paſſion.

There is in man an active and intelligent principle, diſtinct from matter and unlike

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DISC. VIII. to it, which we call mind. By this we are led to conclude, from the works of creation, that there must be a God; and from the historical evidence of facts, that Christianity must be true. In reasoning on the nature and the works of God, and in examining circumstances related in the Gospels, however incompetent we may find our understanding to resolve questions, which may arise to our thoughts; yet such incompetency cannot destroy, cannot weaken the positive certainty of *facts*; those *facts* on which we rest our faith, and by conviction of which we embrace a religion, in itself most excellent, though by its professors corrupted, or misapplied, the Religion of the Gospel.

The reasoning of our minds discerns the Providence of God; whom *openly* to acknowledge and to adore, is a duty of moral obligation, a duty of prudence, a duty consonant with the nature of man, and corresponding with the universal practice of mankind.

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The views of man are not to be confined to the present state of existence only; that he hath a soul destined for immortality, both natural and moral arguments tend strongly to demonstrate, and Revelation expressly declares. To prepare himself for happiness in a state of immortality, by discharging the duties assigned him here, is the great business of man's life: in which important work, his endeavours to be just and holy will be forwarded by Divine assistance, if he will supplicate the Almighty for spiritual aid. DISC. VIII.

This is a summary of right opinions, resulting from a view of those doctrines which would render us unfit for society, disaffected to our country, regardless of moral virtue, and careless about religion.

It might have been conceived, that philosophy, so prejudicial as well as false, would every where have been holden in the detestation it deserves, did not experience unhappily shew, that it hath influence much too extensive. For the reception it hath found, is to be assigned this cause, *viz.*

DISC. VIII. that it immediately and in the most flattering manner applies to the appetites, which it indulges without restraint; whereas detection of its fallacies, and the cultivation of true philosophy require controul of sensual affections and vigorous exercise of reason. But then on the other hand it is to be remembered, that in the very circumstance of applying itself to the lower faculties of human nature, and indeed commonly to the most ignorant part of mankind, it betrays a consciousness of its own inferiority to that wisdom, which claims the attention of intellect and thought. Groveling[35] therefore as it is, let it be rejected with high disdain by every mind,

[35] The terms, in which Bp. Wilkins speaks of the Epicurean philosophy, are strictly and literally applicable to the false philosophy of the present age:

"It doth debase the understanding of man, and all the "principles in him that are sublime and generous, extin- "guishing the very seeds of honour, and piety, and virtue, "affording no room for actions or endeavours that are truly "great and noble; being altogether unworthy of the "nature of man, and doth reduce us to the condition "of beasts." Principles of Natural Religion, l. ii. c. ix. p. 404.

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that feels a commendable pride in being endued with powers not merely brutal, but rational. And those who have not yet perceived by reflection the faculties of their own mind, nor have attained to a due sense of the capacity for improvement with which they are born; such persons will do well, to trust the experience of others, until their own judgment is mature; they will do well, to rely on the veracity of the serious and inquisitive, who after patient research assure them of a truth, that all the paradoxes of false philosophy are but snares of sophistry, calculated to seduce them from maxims of approved excellence, and from principles which have been known and seen to be most salutary, in their tendency to ensure the safety, advance the dignity, and promote the rational happiness of man! DISC. VIII.

Unless there be allowed some first principles, some fundamental axioms, to which we may refer as standards of truth, there can be no rule either in moral or mathematical science, by which to determine whether an argument

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ment be just, or false. In denying therefore all those first principles, in which mankind have universally agreed, false philosophy shews its *folly*. For *folly* it is to oppose reason; and nothing surely can be more in opposition to reason, than to undermine the very groundwork of all reasoning.

In points of discussion not recondite, an enlarged mind very soon discerns the intermediate connexion between the subject and the conclusion; it requires not therefore every *minute* consequence to be distinctly marked in the series of argumentation; nor does it interrupt the course of reasoning by starting futile and frivolous objections. False philosophy discovers its *littleness*, in not having comprehension capable of reaching from the question to the proof through the leading and more prominent steps of the argument: it calls for a multiplicity of deductions; demands that propositions of the simplest kind should be proved with precision unnecessarily scrupulous; raises difficulties, where sound sense would immediately and unerringly decide; and cavils if in the course of argument a single inference be left to be drawn by common understanding, and not absolutely stated in express terms.

By this *folly* and *littleness* in what he would correct, the advocate of truth is compelled to establish maxims, which to the plainest apprehension might appear incontrovertible; and forced to produce demonstration for the justness of positions, which by a mind unsophisticated might have been supposed admissible on their own self-evidence.

These remarks are here subjoined, to satisfy the reader, that of the arguments and proofs used in this discourse, in defence of the better cause, none are superfluous. Such indeed

indeed some of them might well have been considered, were it not become a practice, in morals and philosophy alike vicious, either positively to deny or captiously to dispute the validity of opinions, in their nature indubitable, as that there is light at noon-day. But this sceptical hesitation about known truths is equally far from indicating strength of mind, as that delicacy, which nauseates ordinary sustenance, is contrary to the symptom of a firm constitution. DISC. VIII.

DISCOURSE IX.

REPENTANCE enforced by the Example of St. PETER; and the Goſpel recommended to Moraliſts, on his Authority.

ST. LUKE, xxii. 62.

And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

DISC. IX. OF Hiſtory in general it may be obſerved, that by exhibiting the paſſions which influence man, and by developing the principles which determine his conduct, it makes us acquainted with human nature: and whilſt it traces moral cauſes to their effects, and repreſents the conſequences which reſult from a proper or improper

course of actions, it teaches[1] by example what to avoid, or what to imitate, and thus gives instruction for the directing of our lives, by means of that experience which it imparts unto us, without subjecting us to the difficulty or danger of making trial in our own person[2]. In their uniform tendency to make us thus wise, all kinds of history, deserving the attention of cultivated minds, resemble each other. DISC. IX.

But added to the advantages, which it possesses in common with other records of events and manners, Sacred History carries with it a circumstance of powerful admoni-

[1] Hoc illud est præcipuè in cognitione rerum salubre ac frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in illustri positu monumento intueri: inde tibi tuaque reipublicæ quod imitere, capias: inde fœdum inceptu, fœdum exitu, quod vites. LIVII Præfatio.

[2] Δυοιν γαρ ωντων τροπων φασιν ανθρωποις της επι το βελτιον μεταθεσεως, τε τε δια των ιδιων συμπτωματων και τε δια των αλλοτριων, εναργεστερον μεν εναι συμβαινει τον δια των οικειων περιπετειων, ασφαλεστερον δε τον δια των αλλοτριων. Διο, τον μεν αβασανιστως αιρετεον· επει μετα μεγαλων ποινων και κινδυνων ποιει την διορθωσιν· τον δε αει θηρευτεον, επει χωρις βλαβης εστι συνιδειν εν αυτω το βελτιον.

POLYBIUS, l. i. 35. Ed. CASAUBON, 1670.

DISC. IX. tion peculiar to itſelf, the conſideration of which is important, becauſe forcible in its warning: and it is this; it deſcribes the miſconduct and tranſgreſſion, not of ordinary men only who were indifferent to religion, but of perſons alſo who are diſtinguiſhed as the avowed ſervants of the True God. By thus ſhewing the follies and ſins into which even thoſe who, generally ſpeaking, were virtuous and pious, did nevertheleſs fall in thoſe hours of ſurpriſe and negligence when the authority of Divine command was too faintly recollected; by expoſing the frailities even of ſuch men, they caution the very beſt againſt ſecurity; and bid thoſe who may fancy themſelves beyond the reach of temptation, "take heed leſt they fall [3]," when their hearts are not duly impreſſed with an immediate ſenſe of God and Religion. And indeed it may be for the purpoſe of ſuch premonition, that deeds of imperfection, evil and culpable, committed by thoſe who, upon the whole, were

[3] 1 Cor. x. 12.

devoted

devoted to God, ſhould be at all recorded in Scripture and admitted into the volume, which is to be our book of life. In any other point of view, the mention of facts diſgraceful to the authors of them could not ſo eaſily be reconciled with one very principal object of all [4] Scripture, inſtruction to poſterity. But when it is remarked, that to check preſumption, and awaken the ſoul to a due ſenſe of conſtant dependence on Divine Grace, and to frequent ſupplication for heavenly aid; when it is remarked, that theſe may be the deſigns of making known the ſins and frailties, by which men reputed holy indicated the corruption of human nature, if devoid of religious influence; we may in this light conſider the Sacred Writings equally uſeful when they lay open the faults, as when they paint the virtues of eminent characters; for, in ſo doing, they excite us to be vigilant over our own hearts, leſt our paſſions ſhould hurry us, and our weakneſs betray us, into that which

DISC. IX.

[4] 2 Tim. iii. 16.

is

DISC. IX. is evil, notwithstanding we are convinced in our cooler reflection that it becomes Christians to be uniformly observant of every moral and religious duty.

The account given of St. Peter is particularly calculated to forewarn us against self-confidence. With the open frankness of undesigning and undisguised truth, each of the Evangelists relates the manner in which that Apostle denied he was a disciple of our Lord; and two[5] of them mention particulars which aggravate his guilt. St. Mark himself, though writing under the immediate direction of St. Peter, neither conceals nor extenuates the circumstances of his offence. The mind of the Apostle seems to have been ardent, and thence quickly susceptible of new impressions. He was prompt to make earnest professions of his attachment to Christ, and as hasty in yielding to apprehensions of danger and in violating his promises of fidelity and adher-

[5] St. Matt. xxvi. 74. St. Mark, xiv. 71.

ence.

ence. Signally favoured[6] as he had been by his benign Maſter, he continued ſenſible of the diſtinction ſhewn him; and towards the cloſe of our Lord's miniſtry proteſted that though all others ſhould forſake him, yet he would even die[7] with his Lord. But no ſooner did he perceive that the condemnation with which Chriſt was to be oppreſſed, would involve in peril the followers of his doctrine, than with vehemence and falſehood he declared he knew not the man[8]. DISC. IX.

Doubtleſs we are all diſpoſed to cenſure this vehemence as unbecoming, to condemn this falſehood as criminal, and to conceive that had we been in St. Peter's ſituation, we ſhould not have been guilty of ſimilar miſconduct. But in our haſte to reprehend this weakneſs of the Apoſtle, let us not for-

[6] St. Matt. xvii. 1. See Dr. TOWNSON's "Diſcourſes on the Four Goſpels." Diſc. v. ſ. 2. p. 156. ed. 1788.

[7] St. Matt. xxvi. 35.

[8] St. Matt. xxvi. 74. St. Mark, xiv. 71.

get

DISC. IX. get to queſtion[9] ourſelves. Do *we* then never deny our LORD, nor appear to the world as though we knew him not? In *words* perhaps we do not thus offend; but in *effect* there are occaſions on which too many of us ſo act, as though we either diſbelieved or diſowned that CHRIST is the LORD, whoſe commands we are bound to obey.

In that intercourſe with the world, which every one muſt hold, who would diſcharge his duties[10] to ſociety, it muſt frequently happen

[9] ——— ——— Denique teipſum
Concute, num qua tibi vitiorum inſeverit olim
Natura, aut etiam conſuetudo mala.
HOR. Sat. i. 3. 34.

[10] Our converſation is not the more in Heaven, the more it is abſtracted and removed from the ſocieties on earth.

In order to have our *converſation* in *Heaven*, it is not generally requiſite to fly the converſation of man; it is frequently not only inexpedient, but unlawful; and a good and uſeful man may often be no more allowed to ſubtract his company from the world upon that pretence, than he is to diſmiſs his ſoul from his body, that it may be the ſooner in a better place.

Our

happen that we meet with perſons, who are inclined to treat religion with diſreſpect. Ignorant as they are of the arguments by which Chriſtianity is defended, incompetent to decide on its pretenſions to truth, incapable of conceiving the ſalutary influence it has on human manners, and indifferent to the conſequences of a careleſs life, they affect the language of incredulity, miſtake petulance for freedom of ſpeech, and deem raillery on ſerious ſubjects a mark of humour and facetious wit. It may not be proper at all ſeaſons to "anſwer a fool accord-" ing to his folly":" but it is proper, and it behoves us at all times, to avoid ſhewing

DISC. IX.

Our converſation is to be yet on earth, the ſtation God has aſſigned us; and here it is to be in Heaven; we living in this mixt world, as thoſe who know that hereafter they ſhall be of a ſeparate unpolluted ſociety.

Bp. HOOPER's Sixth Sermon, p. 656. fol. edit.

[11] Prov. xxvi. 4. To all occaſions, where the converſation is beginning to turn on improper ſubjects, the precept of Epictetus is applicable:

Αν μεν ουν οἱος τε ἡς, μεταγε τοις σοις λογοις τους των συνοιτων επι το προσηκον. ει δε εν αλλοφυλοις αποληφθεις τυχοις, σιωπα.

ENCHIRID. c. 42.

approb-

DISC. IX. approbation of misapplied ridicule, by any look or gesture that may be interpreted as expressing secret applause at what rather merits, though it openly receives not, our severest reproof. If in the wantonness of levity, or through false shame of appearing singular, or misconception of politeness, we join in the mirth which derides our religion, we are then, in some measure, guilty of renouncing our faith, as we concur in making our principles objects of contempt. No man, who is deeply impressed with admiration of Christianity, and is earnest in hoping to partake of its mercies, can hear, without emotions of disgust and abhorrence, the slightest reproach uttered against a religion, on which he depends for eternal salvation: let him therefore, who can find pleasure in the sneers and insinuations of infidelity, suspect and fear that he is not yet so rooted in his faith, as to have overcome all doubts whether Christ be his Lord and Redeemer.

In a manner more productive of ill consequences is Christ denied by us, when the general

general courſe of our lives does not cor- DISC. IX.
reſpond with our profeſſion. By obſervers of our conduct it can ſcarcely be credited that we really believe the doctrines of Chriſtianity, when we continue acting in direct oppoſition to the virtues they inculcate. Nor can we wonder that our ſincerity be doubted, if from our principles there proceed not better effects. Indifferent ſpectators have not opportunities of knowing our reflections in ſecret retirement: they can judge of our ſentiments and perſuaſion only from the appearance of circumſtances obvious to their view and open to their notice. Nor do the evils of habitual vice terminate in ourſelves alone. If ſerious Chriſtians are offended by it, ſcoffers are thence emboldened to inſult a religion, the diſciples of which they find ſo little influenced by its precepts, its threats, or its promiſes. Thus the name of Chriſt is blaſphemed through our depravity, and we are inſtrumental to retarding the progreſs and efficacy of the Goſpel.

Who-

DISC. IX. Whoever then has been guilty of denying our Lord in either of theſe inſtances, let him not forget to condemn himſelf, when he cenſures the fall of St. Peter. Different indeed are the facts, which conſtitute the offence; but the ſin is equal, if not greater in him, who, though under no dread of imminent danger, does yet ſacrifice the dignity and trample on the authority of his Saviour.

It is not juſtice to reprobate the faults, and not commend the virtues of a perſon. If in our thoughts we condemn the failings, we ſhould alſo admire the contrition of the Apoſtle. No ſooner did our Lord turn his eyes upon him, than St. Peter was ſmitten in his conſcience, and overwhelmed with grief. He was brought to his recollection by a look[12] only: but what a look! We may conceive it thus ſtrongly though ſilently rebuking him; "Is this the proof of "that unſhaken conſtancy, which had re-

[12] See Bp. SHERLOCK's Diſcourſe XVI. vol. ii. p. 381. fifth edition.

ſolved

" ſolved to ſuffer death in my cauſe? In
" the moment of thy boaſting did I not
" forewarn thee, that the time would ſoon
" come when thou wouldſt even diſown
" me? Unhappy man! go humble thyſelf
" with abaſement, and repent of thy ingra-
" titude with confuſion and ſorrow." To
ſome ſuch effect did St. Peter underſtand it,
when our Lord beheld him. He remem-
bered the words which Jeſus had ſpoken
unto him: " and when he thought thereon,
" he went out and wept bitterly." He felt
the reproof in its full force, and haſtened to
relieve the agonies of his ſoul by a flood of
tears.

DISC. IX.

And now let us conſider if our ſituation does not nearly reſemble the condition of St. Peter. We too have profeſſed ourſelves devoted to Chriſt, and have all too frequently violated our profeſſion. At our baptiſm, our ſponſors promiſed for us; at our confirmation, we took on ourſelves the Chriſtian vow, in our own perſons. On every repetition of the Lord's ſupper, we renew that vow. By the terms of this engagement we

DISC. IX. are bound to renounce all practices followed by the world repugnant to the duties we owe God and our fellow-creatures; to resist all temptations, and avoid all opportunities of indulging corrupt appetite; to subdue malignant and malevolent passions, which create among mankind such infinite mischief, and which indeed become only infernal spirits; and to cultivate those humane and benevolent affections, which are inculcated and exemplified by the Divine Author of our religion. If the duties of our covenant were fully discharged, there would be found among Christians neither perjury, nor blasphemy, nor impiety; there would be found neither falsehoods, nor frauds, nor deceits; there would be found no foul works of darkness, nor impudent and barefaced debaucheries, nor cruel breaking of the nuptial vow; there would be found no gratifying of private malice, no persecuting of an adversary, even to his ruin, nor desire of revenge to be satiated only by the death of him who may have given the offence. But much as we may be disposed to flatter human

nature, it would contradict the history of man in all nations and ages professing Christianity, did we not acknowledge and lament, that in every country, and at every period, the vices forbidden by the Gospel have been too prevalent among those who call themselves the servants of Christ. In one or other respect we have all transgressed; and, in the impartial judgment of a God most holy, no man living can appear righteous! DISC. IX.

We have not indeed the presence of Christ to rebuke us by his countenance; but we have his word perpetually and earnestly pressing us to repent, to be converted, to come unto Him. If by long continuance in vicious habits we are not insensible to the pangs of remorse, nor deaf to the calls of grace, let the contrition of St. Peter be an example for our sorrow. Let us wring our hearts with grief for all that we have done displeasing to our God and merciful Redeemer. And what shall be the proof of our sincerity? The Apostle will shew us, that reverse of conduct is the only sure test of unfeigned repentance. In the sequel of his history,

DISC. IX. we see at Jerusalem, the very place where Christ's enemies were still triumphant, we there see *him*, who of late denied his Lord, now become the first and boldest in maintaining the divine mission, in asserting the Resurrection [13] of Christ, and in exhorting all men to accept Him as the Messiah. We find him resolutely protesting before the Jewish Rulers, that he would not displease God for the sake of pleasing men; he would not sacrifice his duty, and conceal what he knew to be truth, however they might persecute, afflict, or punish him. Here then we have a pattern of sincere repentance, endeavouring by words and

[13] St. Peter, by asserting the Resurrection of our Lord, gives strong presumptive proof that Christ actually did rise from the dead. For it is not to be conceived, that he, who through timidity denied Christ before his death, would have confessed him, and have suffered for such confession, after Christ's death, if he had not been convinced by ocular demonstration that Christ was risen indeed. Σι δε μη ανεστη (says CHRYSOSTOM) ουκ αν ὁ ζωντα αρνησαμενος, ὡστε μη αρνησασθαι τελευτησαντα, μυριους αν θανατους ὑπεμεινε.

CHRYSOSTOM, vol. vii. p. 640. D. ed. Paris. 1616.

actions

actions directly contrary to thoſe, in which he had offended, to atone, if poſſible, for his paſt criminality. Have we then at any time inſulted the Majeſty of God, either by falſe oaths, or profane ſwearing, or contempt of religious worſhip? Let us not for the future take God's name in vain, nor be inattentive to prayer, that rational ſervice. Have we in any manner acted diſhoneſtly towards our neighbour? Let us repair the injury to the utmoſt of our power. Have we tranſgreſſed the bounds of modeſty, or violated the laws of connubial fidelity? Let us learn to be ſober and temperate in all things. Have we yielded to vindictive paſſions? Let us ſtrive to conquer them, and to acquire placability of temper. DISC. IX.

And wherefore this reformation? this change of the whole man? As it is obviouſly a work of extreme difficulty, there ſhould be aſſigned ſome cogent reaſon to convince us that the reſtraining and correcting of our vicious propenſities is our poſitive duty. Thus then we are commanded to do by the Goſpel; and the Goſpel itſelf, which ſo di-

DISC. IX. rects us to be devout and holy, juſt and honeſt, chaſte and pure, kind and forgiving, that Goſpel, in the confeſſion of St. Peter [14], hath "the words of eternal life," and pronounces this amendment of heart and manners as a condition, without which we cannot ſecure happineſs in a ſtate of immortality.

Under the character of containing "the "words of eternal life," the Goſpel recommends itſelf to every perſon, who doth but allow the two firſt principles of natural religion, *viz.* the Exiſtence of God, and a Future Retribution. For if there be a God, He muſt be perfect: and if perfect, He muſt be juſt and holy. If there be a Future Retribution diſpenſed by Him, rewards and punishments muſt be diſtributed according to the laws of juſtice and holineſs. Thus the future recompence of every ſoul ſhall be in exact proportion with our goodneſs. Take then the Goſpel in the loweſt ſenſe, as a work merely which can teach us goodneſs; even in that light it may be ſaid to contain

[14] St. John, vi. 68.

the

the "words of eternal life." For, the Gospel inculcates that alone, which can be called goodneſs, *viz.* ſtrict rectitude in heart and manners, to the utmoſt degree that can be applicable to human life. Other ſyſtems [15] indeed there are, which preſcribe more ſevere auſterities; and their injunctions may be compatible with orders of men ſecluded from ſociety: but as their rigid inſtitutes of abſtraction are not practicable by the world in general, the ſyſtems themſelves are uſeleſs, and may be rejected as not calculated for man in his preſent ſtate of exiſtence. On the contrary, the precepts of Chriſtianity are univerſal in extent. There is neither age, nor condition, nor country, which will not admit of compliance with the *ſpirit* of them, and in which ſuch compliance will not tend to the acquiring of thoſe virtues, that ultimately will lead to the happineſs of eternity. Even the Moraliſt [16], who looks not beyond DISC. IX.

[15] See RYAN's Hiſtory of the Effects of Religion, vol. i. p. 219, &c.

[16] The reaſonings of Bp. SHERLOCK, in vol. iii. diſc. 14. p. 333 to p. 341, claim the ſerious attention of every moraliſt.

DISC. IX. this preſent world, even he, if he would act conſiſtently with his profeſſions of being an advocate for pure morality, is bound to receive and admire Chriſtianity; for, either to be wilfully ignorant of it, or to reject a ſyſtem, in which morality is carried to its higheſt perfection, would betray deficiency in the knowledge of moral ſcience equally culpable in the Moraliſt, as ignorance of the moſt improved ſyſtem in phyſics would be unpardonable in the Naturaliſt.

But a Moraliſt, who is ſuch in reality, and not in name only, will not confine his views to this life alone; for he will wiſh there ſhould be ſome ſanction that might enforce the obſervance of morals. But as ſuch ſanction cannot adequately be eſtabliſhed in this world, he will gladly adopt the doctrine of retribution, as being moſt prevalent in its efficacy to perſuade men that they ſhould uniformly diſcharge their moral duties. With this doctrine the Goſpel, taken merely as a moral ſyſtem, entirely accords: for it impreſſes on the mind all thoſe excellent qualities which reaſon can demonſtrate as probably

probably moſt acceptable to a God, who will allot happineſs or miſery, accordingly as men have obſerved or violated the laws of moral goodneſs. DISC. IX.

But the Moraliſt may be aſked, what ſcheme he propoſes, by which to eſcape puniſhment, if he himſelf has violated the duties of morality? It is more than probable, that much as he may love moral goodneſs, yet he may have often tranſgreſſed its laws, even againſt the dictates of his own conſcience. How are ſuch offences to be compenſated? If God is to diſpoſe rewards and puniſhments according to the rules of juſtice and holineſs, the violators of morality muſt be puniſhed for their acts of immorality, ſo far as the Moraliſt can ſhew any thing to the contrary. He will reply, "God is "merciful and will forgive upon repent-"ance." But when, or where, in natural religion, is that *proved?* And how ſhall we ſuperſede thoſe other attributes, the juſtice and holineſs of God? God is indeed merciful, but he is alſo juſt and holy: how then

DISC. IX. then is the Moraliſt to avoid puniſhment, conſiſtently with juſtice and holineſs, ſuppoſing he has been immoral? Natural religion *will* not, *cannot* extricate him from this difficulty: if then he wiſhes to be eaſy on this point, before he depart hence to the ſtate of retribution, let him conſult that book, which alone of all writings extant among men, can give him ſatisfaction, and which on that higher account may be truly ſaid to contain "the words of eternal "life."

The Moraliſt perhaps will be ready enough to avail himſelf of the redemption there ſet forth: but ſtill, as a virtuous life is in all circumſtances neceſſary towards the ſecuring of eternal happineſs, he may conceive that if upon the whole he be morally good, it muſt be matter of indifference whether he does or does not obſerve Chriſtian rites, and profeſs Chriſtian faith. Had it been the condition of ſuch a perſon to have lived in a country where the Goſpel was not known, it cannot be doubted that the effects

effects of univerſal redemption[17] would have been extended to him, in proportion as he had acted according to the beſt knowledge of duty his mind could acquire. As he never could have heard of Chriſtian rites or Chriſtian faith, ſo in equity it could not have been demanded of him, either to have obſerved the one, or profeſſed the other. But the caſe is widely different with thoſe who are born and educated in Chriſtian nations. They are told by the Goſpel, that, ſuperadded to the duties which reaſon ſuggeſts, there is required of them obedience to the ordinances of Chriſtianity. Such obedience, if they pay not, though impeded by no mental incapacity from being acquainted with thoſe ordinances, they do not walk according to the beſt knowledge of duty imparted to them: they preclude, therefore, themſelves from title to the benefits of Chriſtian

DISC. IX.

[17] The Heathen, we doubt not, who lives up to the light God hath given him, receives the benefit of the atonement of Chriſt.

GILPIN's "Expoſition of the New Teſtament," St. Paul's Second Epiſtle to Timothy, i. 9. note.

redemp-

DISC. IX. redemption, for they comply not with the conditions on which thoſe benefits are offered, *i. e.* faith in Chriſt, and obedience to his poſitive commands. But in ſuch a ſtate, they will find it difficult, nay impoſſible, to aſſign any means, by which to atone for the infringements on the moral law. The Goſpel then, as it points out the only atonement, and communicates the terms on which we may participate in its benefits, may, in a peculiar manner, be ſaid to contain the "words of eternal life."

For a final confirmation of what we maintain, *viz.* that to the practice of morality muſt be added obſervance of Chriſtian ordinances, and acknowledgment of Chriſtian faith, we may have recourſe to a memorable tranſaction recorded of the Apoſtle, on whom we have been diſcourſing. St. Peter was expreſsly admoniſhed to reveal the divine miſſion of Chriſt and to preach remiſſion of ſins through faith in Him, to Cornelius [18], a man eminent for moral good-

[18] See Bp. SHERLOCK's Diſcourſe XII. vol. i. p. 336. fifth edition.

neſs.

neſs [19]. Had moral goodneſs been of itſelf ſufficient, when it was poſſible to become acquainted with revealed religion, neither had Cornelius been directed to ſeek inſtruction from St. Peter, nor had St. Peter been ſent to lay open the doctrines of the Goſpel to Cornelius. With this example then placed in his view, no one who pretends to have ſtudied the ſacred writings, can, with propriety, aſſert the ſufficiency of morals alone. As for thoſe who *will* not conſult Scripture, their plea for reſting wholly on morality, muſt be their ignorance. But then to conceive that in a country enlightened by revelation, ſuch *wilful* ignorance of a concern ſo important as that which reſpects the future deſtination of our immortal ſouls either to eternal happineſs or eternal miſery, and the terms on which the one may be ſecured and the other avoided; to conceive that *wilful* ignorance in ſuch a caſe can be deemed in itſelf *excuſable*, is as contrary to the judgment of right reaſon, as

DISC. IX.

[19] Acts, x.

it

DISC. IX. it is repugnant to the general ſenſe of the Goſpel. That any ſhould love "darkneſs "rather than light[20]," ſhould chooſe error in preference to perfect information, is ſurely a mark of indifference to ſpiritual improvement, which neither rational men, nor the All-wiſe Giver of our mental faculties can poſſibly approve. Even in human governments, if the offender hath wanted neither means of knowing, nor ability to underſtand the exiſting laws, voluntary[21] igno-

[20] St. John, iii. 19.

[21] "Regula eſt, juris quidem ignorantiam cuique "nocere." Digeſt, quoted by BURLAMAQUI in "The "Principles of Natural and Political Law." Part I. c. x. ſ. 10.

"A miſtake in point of law (ſays BLACKSTONE) which "every perſon of diſcretion not only may, but is bound "and preſumed to know, is in criminal caſes no ſort of "defence. "*Ignorantia juris, quod quiſque tenetur ſcire, "neminem excuſat,*" is as well the maxim of our own law, "as it was of the Roman." Commentaries, b. iv. c. ii. v.

See alſo PUFFENDORF's "Libri duo de Officio Hominis," &c. l. i. c. i. ſ. 21.

With reſpect to ignorance *involuntary*, every humane perſon will adopt as his own, the following words of Bp. Hooper: "In theſe many *differences* of thinking, concern-"ing our Saviour's perſon and pleaſure, we piouſly hope "that

ignorance is not admitted as a defence in extenuation of guilt. To imagine then it will avail in the judgment of God, is to ſuppoſe the Divine Adminiſtration more weak than human; an opinion this, irreconcileable with every idea we can form of God's perfection and man's infirmity. DISC. IX.

It remains then for us who have embraced Chriſtianity, to improve our talents by the attainment of religious wiſdom; heightening our natural ſenſe of right and wrong by the refinement of the Goſpel; and ſtrengthening other motives to a virtuous life, by earneſt endeavours to increaſe our faith in Chriſt, and to obſerve what He hath commanded.

"that he will mercifully conſider the infirmities and errors "of men; and accept the ſervices of the well-meaning; "pardoning their ignorance and want of diſcernment, "if not too careleſs and too wilful."

The fourth Sermon, p. 632. of his Works.

DISCOURSE X.

On ſome Principal Virtues in the Character of St. PAUL.

PHILIPPIANS, iii. 17.

Brethren, be followers together of me; and mark them which walk ſo, as ye have us for an enſample[1].

DISC. X. THAT St. Paul, who was deeply affected with the ſpirit of a religion, which inculcates humility as a diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic; and who himſelf enumerates boaſters[2] amongſt thoſe vicious perſons, who were to abound in a corrupt age; that

[1] For the ground-work of this Diſcourſe, ſee the Extracts from WITSIUS, in the Appendix.

[2] 2 Tim. iii. 2.

even

even he should nevertheless propose his own conduct as a pattern for imitation, may perhaps at first sight appear inconsistent and extraordinary. But before we can pronounce either on the fitness or impropriety of words and actions in general, the occasion which required them must previously be understood. If then we examine into the circumstances under which St. Paul was writing, we shall find this self-commendation perfectly justifiable, and in no respect contrary to that lowliness of mind prescribed by the Gospel. DISC. X.

In almost every place where he preached, St. Paul had to contend with warm adversaries; who, although they admitted the fundamental principles of Christianity, yet they strenuously maintained observance of the Mosaic ritual to be still absolutely necessary. Ambitious of gaining adherents to their persuasion, these zealots availed themselves of St. Paul's absence; propagated their opinions with great assiduity; created divisions amongst the converts; diminished the numbers of the Apostle's followers; and

DISC. X. in order more completely to gain proselytes, they magnified their own merits and services, vilifying St. Paul by every term of reproach that could make him contemptible. Represented as he was in disadvantageous colours, and extremely solicitous lest the cause of Christian Liberty should be subverted by these advocates for Jewish bondage[3], he frequently felt himself called forth to vindicate his own character and doctrine, and was repeatedly compelled to state the sacrifices which himself had made to his Faith, having relinquished[4] the highest advantages that a Jew could boast, for the hopes he had conceived of salvation through Christ. It was impossible that any one could give more unequivocal proof of sincere conviction, than by the abandoning of

[3] Gal. ii. 4.

[4] Ουκ αν δε, ει ανθρωποις αρεσκειν ηθελε, μετεθετο προς την πιστιν, δια τι; ετιματο παρα Ιουδαιοις, και αδειας απηλαυσε πολλης, και προεδριας ηξιουτο· ουκ αν ουν προς επικινδυνον μετεστη βιον τον των αποστολων. —— το καταλιπειν μεν την παρα Ιουδαιοις τιμην και τον απολεμον βιον, ανταλλαξασθαι δε την των αποστολων ζωην, την μυριους εχουσαν θανατους, μεγιστη γεγονεν αποδειξις του μη δι' ανθρωπινην τινα προφασιν μετατεθειναι τον Παυλον.

CHRYSOSTOM, vol. vii. p. 642. D. edit. Paris. 1616.

present

present privileges for the prospect of Divine acceptance through Christ in a state of future existence. To that point therefore of his conduct he encourages the Philippians to direct their view; in their adherence to Christ as the sole author of salvation, he exhorts them to follow him; and he asserts himself to be more deserving of credit and esteem than his vaunting enemies, who, with all their shew of affected zeal for the cause of God, were in reality endeavouring only to gratify their own pride and promote their own worldly interests.

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St. Paul then, on occasions of this nature, which indeed occurred perpetually through the whole of his ministry, was compelled[5] to plead in his own behalf. And though the last person, of whom any one ought to speak, should be himself[6], yet when a cause of importance demands self-defence, truth may be delivered with equal freedom and

[5] See Lord LITTLETON's "Conversion of St. Paul," in vol. ii. of his Works, p. 65. edit. 1776.

[6] Epictetus, s. 53. Εν ταις ὁμιλιαις απεστω, το τινα των ἑαυτου εργων, η κινδυνων, επι πολυ και αμετρως μεμνησθαι.

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energy in our own vindication, as in ſupport of others. Nor can the imputation of vanity be chargeable on ſuch regard for our own credit; on the contrary, there is often concealed more vanity in an aſſumed reſerve or pretended undervaluing of the qualities we know really belonging to us[7].

Having remarked thus much on the propriety[8] with which the Apoſtle clears himſelf from the calumnies of falſe teachers, and with which by his own example he animates the converts to rely for ſalvation on Chriſtianity alone; we may now proceed to the general purpoſe of this Diſcourſe; which is, to point out ſome principal virtues in St. Paul's character, and to ſhew in what inſtances it may become us to imitate him.

[7] See Biſhop SHERLOCK's 4th Diſcourſe, vol. iii. p. 69. edit. 1764.

[8] Μεγα αγαθον το μηδεν μεγα περι ἑαυτου λεγειν. Ὁ δε οὑτως αυτο ευκαιρως ποιει, ὡς ειπων μαλλον, η σιγησας, επαινεθηναι· και ει μη τουτο πεποιηκε, των ακαιρως εγκωμιαζοντων κατηγορηθη αν μαλλον. Ει γαρ μη ικαυχησατο, παντα αν απωλεσε και προεδωκεν, και τα των εχθρων αν επηρε πραγματα.

CHRYSOSTOM, vol. vii. p. 606. D. ed. Paris. 1616.

First

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First then, let us observe that HUMILITY with which he abases[9] himself on every recollection of the excessive hatred he once bore to Christianity. All that he had done and suffered in the cause of Christ, since the period of his conversion, seemed in his opinion an atonement inadequate to the guilt[10] he had contracted by his furious persecution. We perhaps may never have been inimical to Christianity; but in the hour of inconsideration we may have spoken lightly

[9] 1 Cor. xv. 9.

[10] Though his violence against Christianity proceeded from ignorance of its real nature, and from a persuasion that he ought to persecute it; yet St. Paul calls himself "the Chief of Sinners" for having thus acted. On which Dr. DODDRIDGE remarks, "he hereby shews how "much *guilt* a man may contract, without acting directly "contrary to the *conviction* of his mind, if he has neglected an *impartial* care in forming his principles of "action." 1 Tim. i. 15.

The Apostle is so far from considering his *ignorance* of that, which in candour and equity he was bound to have examined, an excuse for his conduct, that he makes it the very ground of self-condemnation.

This case will illustrate what was said towards the conclusion of the preceding Discourse, p. 286.

See also the passage quoted from Dr. REID towards the end of Discourse VIII, p. 252.

DISC. X. of religion, and in ſeaſons of intemperance may have tranſgreſſed its duties. Whatever proficiency, therefore, we may have made at preſent in Chriſtian perfection, ſtill there will always remain too juſt reaſon for humbling ourſelves in our own thoughts and before God, when paſt follies are brought to our remembrance.

The writings of St. Paul abound with inſtances of the moſt concluſive reaſoning[11], and with ſtrokes of the moſt ſublime[12] though chaſte and ſerious eloquence[13]. Yet we find him not ſelf-ſufficient in his abilities; nor conceiving his powers of ſpeech in any other[14] reſpect valuable than

[11] See Fenelon's Dialogues concerning Eloquence, p. 143. Engliſh ed. 1722.

[12] See "The Third Preliminary Eſſay," prefixed to "A New Literal Tranſlation of all the Apoſtolical Epiſtles;" by Dr. MACKNIGHT, p. 66. vol. i.

[13] Caruit quidem ambitiosâ illâ, fucatâ et oſtentatrice loquacitate, inſtar meretricis ſe ſuperfluè ornante ac jactante: verùm non caruit iſtâ gravi et ſeriâ dicendi facultate, quâ res perſpicuè ac commodè explicare potuit, quæque propriè Apoſtolum Chriſti decuit.

Philologiæ Sacræ GLASSII, l. i. tr. iv. ſect. 4.

[14] 1 Cor. ii. 2.

as

as they promoted the cauſe of Chriſt; nor attributing the wonderful ſucceſs of his preaching to his own talents, but to the divine aſſiſtance[15]. Hence we are taught that though uſeful learning be unſpeakably valuable, yet vain is the conceited pride of learning; that the worth of our attainments depends upon the application of them to beneficial purpoſes; and that for all our endowments, natural, moral, and intellectual, we ſhould be thankful to God as the ultimate Author of "every good and perfect gift[16]."

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Called though he was in a manner extraordinary[17] to the office of an Apoſtle, and though in the power[18] of working miracles and in the exerciſe of other graces, for the confirmation of the Goſpel, he was in no degree inferior to the "very chiefeſt "of the Apoſtles[19]," yet St. Paul did not preſumptuouſly conſider himſelf ſo ſecure of divine approbation in a future ſtate, as

[15] 2 Cor. iii. 5. and 1 Cor. xv. 10.
[16] St. James, i. 17. [17] Acts, ix. 3.
[18] Rom. xv. 19. [19] 2 Cor. xi. 5.

DISC. X. to think himſelf diſcharged from the neceſſity of paying the ſtricteſt attention to his moral conduct. On the contrary, we find him even at an advanced age diſclaiming[20] all pretenſions to conſummate goodneſs and certainty of future recompenſe; and labouring to ſubdue[21] his paſſions, leſt he ſhould not attain to that ſalvation which he had preached to others. Nor was it till the near approach of his death, that in the prophetic ſpirit with which he was endowed, he confidently ſays, "henceforth there is "laid up for me a crown of righteouſ-"neſs[22]." Who then having before him in this eminent Apoſtle ſuch an example of diffidence, ſelf-inſpection, and ſupplication for God's aſſiſtance, will deceive himſelf into an illuſive aſſurance that he hath reached perfection? To the lateſt hour of exiſtence let the beſt of men apprehend danger, and beware, leſt in a moment of unexpected ſurpriſe, they fall into ſin.

[20] Philipp. iii. 12. [21] 1 Cor. ix. 27.
[22] 2 Tim. iv. 8.

Though

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Though for the exigencies of life a competency is requiſite, and for purpoſes of liberality affluence is deſirable; and though in the arrangements of human ſociety marks of diſtinction[23] are confeſſedly gratifying; yet to be ſo intent either on the gaining of riches or the procuring of honours, as to make that the ſole object of our thoughts and actions, is to betray a ſordid[24] and mean diſpoſition. The cenſure which is paſſed on ſuch a temper in the judgment of mankind in general, is founded on this reaſon; it is known by experience, that perſons who are enſlaved by invincible deſires of wealth or pre-eminence, will, for the ſake of acquiring affluence and in the proſpect of ſecuring aſcendancy, ſacrifice every virtue by which man can be adorned and rendered amiable.

When on the other hand the bettering of our condition, either in fortune or rank, is

[23] Propterque honeſtatis et gloriæ ſimilitudinem, Beati, qui honorati ſunt, videntur: miſeri, qui ſunt inglorii. Cic. de Leg. i. 11.

[24] Εν τῳ κοινῳ βιῳ οὐδεν ὑπαρχει μεγα, ὁ το καταφρονειν ἐστι μεγα. Longin. 7.

made

DISC. X. made but a ſecondary and ſubordinate concern, ſubſervient to every conſideration of moral excellence, this is deemed an indication of magnanimity[25]: for it ſhews, that conſcience, integrity, reputation, freedom, are preferred to the gratifications of lucre, to the corruption of iniquity, to univerſal contempt, to abject ſervility[26].

Frequently did St. Paul refuſe[27] to accept even the rewards which his laborious ſervices might have juſtly claimed: and his general language is that of a man, who was devoted to the high cauſe he had undertaken, and who was ready to ſacrifice every object of earthly affection[28], in the diſcharge of the duties to which he was called. Thus we ſee in him a noble MAGNANIMITY, which diſplays itſelf, by a comparative diſregard of worldly advantages; by a

[25] See Cic. Off. Lib. i. ſ. 20.

[26] Qui pauperiem veritus, potiore metallis
Libertate caret; dominum vehet improbus, atque
Serviet æternùm, quia parvo neſciet uti.
HOR. Ep. L. i. 10. 39.

[27] 2 Cor. xi. 9, 10. and 1 Theſſ. ii. 9.

[28] Rom. viii. 35—9.

ZEAL

ZEAL for Christianity, which through journeyings[29] widely extended no difficulties could diminish; by a resolute[30] firmness in a general contempt of danger, which no evils of the bitterest[31] persecution, though severely painful to him as a man, could ever so far weaken as to make him desist from his Evangelical Mission. Should we grant, which however we do not; should we grant that through the feelings[32] of human nature he was sometimes compelled to avail himself of fair opportunities for escaping punishment; yet no regard to self-preservation could induce him to misrepresent the Gospel Truths: nor did he ever attempt to leave any but those places where his ministry would have been absolutely ineffectual, and where longer continuance would have been an act of the highest temerity

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[29] See WITSIUS in the Appendix.

[30] Acts, xxi. 13. [31] 2 Cor. xi. 23.

[32] CHRYSOSTOM, vol. vii. p. 612. C. Ἡ γαρ φυσις τα αὐτης και ακοντων ἡμων επιδεικνυται, και κρωτησαι των ελαττωματων εκεινων ουκ ενι, ουδε τον σφοδρα βουλομενον και σπουδαζοντα.—Ου γαρ το φυσιν εχειν ελαττωμα εχουσαν, εγκλημα· αλλα το τοις ελαττωμασι δουλευειν.

and

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and indiscretion [33]. It is no part either of courage or of wisdom to expose life wantonly, when by the peril incurred no adequate effect can possibly be accomplished. When the Gospel could be forwarded, St. Paul manifested a degree of fortitude suitable to his mind, which in all other respects was so exalted. Not therefore to fear must it be imputed, that on some conjunctures he turned to advantage the means of security which the occasion offered: Fear was no ingredient in his temper: we may ascribe his circumspection either to that *rational* regard for himself, of which the bravest of men need not be ashamed; or rather [34] (and indeed it seems to be the true motive) to an anxious concern that the Gospel might be

[33] "It is neither for the interest of religion, nor the "glory of our Master, that we should voluntarily expose "either ourselves or our doctrines to the hatred and con-"tempt of the world."

Bishop SHERLOCK, vol. iv. Disc. 7. p. 189. ed. 1764.

[34] Πανταχȣ εἀυτον ετηρει τῳ κηρυγματι. Τινος ȣν ἑνεκεν τȣτο εποιεῖ; ἱνα ενδιατρεψῃ τῳ κηρυγματι, και μετα πολλων ανθρωπων απελθῃ, παντων ετεφανωμενων.

CHRYSOSTOM, vol. vii. p. 621. A. B.

preached

preached ſtill farther, if he were but preſerved. We may conclude hence, that it is of importance to learn a right eſtimate of temporal bleſſings, and a due diſcrimination between moral and worldly objects. For as the ſentiments and conduct of perſons moſt uſually correſpond with the purpoſe intended, ſo it will direct our thoughts to a proper view, and influence our actions to a laudable end, if our minds are ſtrongly impreſſed with a generous perſuaſion that moral goodneſs is ever beyond compariſon more valuable than pecuniary emoluments or local dignities. DISC. X.

But moderating our eſtimation of wealth and power, is not the only circumſtance which furniſhes occaſion for the exerciſe of Magnanimity. "I keep under my body, "and bring it into ſubjection[35]," ſays the Apoſtle; intimating thereby that he was a champion in a conteſt of extreme difficulty, a conteſt with his appetites which he laboured to vanquiſh. Infinitely more ar-

[35] 1 Cor. ix. 27.

duous

DISC. X. duous is it to overcome our ſenſual paſſions, than to reſiſt any conſiderations pecuniary or ambitious. In the ſtruggle with thoſe enemies to our virtue and peace, there needs that courage which is deficient in thouſands, who yet would ſpurn at the idea of an unworthy inducement to action, and who can encounter unappalled the moſt imminent perils deſtructive to their exiſtence. In the acquiring of *that* courage, the courage to withſtand ſollicitations from vicious thoughts and vicious men, let our exertions be habitually employed: and let us prove our magnanimity [36] in maintaining a firm adherence to purity and innocence, ſuffering neither the vehemence of our own inclinations to precipitate, nor the miſtaken apprehenſions of falſe ſhame to miſlead, nor the weak timidity of irreſolution to betray us into offences againſt ſobriety and modeſty.

[36] Non eſt, non (mihi crede) tantum ab hoſtibus armatis ætati noſtræ periculum, quantum ab circumfuſis undique voluptatibus. Qui eas ſuâ temperantiâ frænavit, ac domuit, multo majus decus, majoremque ſibi victoriam peperit, quàm nos Syphace victo habemus.

LIV. 30. 14.

Nor

Nor is Religion the ſole cauſe in which we may diſplay our zeal. It is indeed the firſt and beſt, but it is not the only object which ſhould call forth the powers of our mind and body. Either by agricultural, mechanic, or commercial purſuits; either by profeſſional engagements in letters, arts, or arms; either by juridical diſcuſſions, or ſenatorial deliberations; we are all required, each in his proper line, to be zealous for our own credit and character, for our families, for our friends, our connexions, our country. Did we ſay, Religion is not the ſole cauſe in which we may diſplay our zeal? Let us recall the expreſſion, and ſpeak more correctly: Zeal exerted in behalf of all theſe concerns, is part of Religion: for true Religion extends its influence through every department, and regulates every action both of private and public life. He that, on all occaſions, hath the glory of God immediately in his view, is indeed the more pious man: but every one who diſcharges his duty with active diligence and honeſt fidelity, is doing the will of God, and is ſo far

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DISC. X. far religious. And as in other reſpects, ſo in this alſo, St. Paul ſets us an example, labouring as he did with his own hands by night and by day[37]. To the ſame purpoſe ſtrongly does he admoniſh us, when he gives it in charge that "if any will not "work, neither ſhould he eat[38]." For although this precept, in its literal ſenſe, cannot be applicable to perſons in all circumſtances, yet in its wider meaning it is ſo far of obligation, as that it enforces on all men the propriety of attention to the peculiar offices, which according to their reſpective functions and ranks they owe ſociety. Taken in this more enlarged acceptation, the precept is univerſally binding. For the relation in which each of us is placed towards thoſe around him, and the various talents with which we are endowed for the executing of works, different indeed in themſelves, but all tending ultimately to general advantage; theſe manifeſtly indi-

[37] 1 Theſſ. ii. 9. 1 Cor. iv. 12.

[38] 2 Theſſ. iii. 10. See Dr. MACKNIGHT on the Paſſage.

cate

cate that the will of God ordains for each DISC. X.
of us ſome employment alike beneficial to ourſelves and to the community. "Whilſt "we have time, then, let us do good unto "all men[39]." The ſeaſon may come, when we ſhall be diſqualified for ſtrenuous induſtry. Sickneſs, want, and ſorrow may hereafter overtake us: and tyrants they are ſo imperious and irreſiſtible, that they compel the ſtouteſt hearts to ſeek conſolation from any and every ſource of diverſion, which can relieve pain and diſpel anxiety. Under the preſſure of theſe calamities, humanity claims, and allows indulgence. But whilſt bodily ſtrength is yet unimpaired by debility; whilſt our mental faculties are neither embarraſſed by neceſſity, nor depreſſed by grief; during that happy period of life to ſhrink from the labour, either of preparing for a creditable ſtation, or of ably filling it when undertaken; to ſhrink from that labour, for the ſake of gratifying a propenſity to liſtleſs indolence, frivolous trifling,

[39] Gal. vi. 9.

DISC. X. or amusements *then* improper, when either *unseasonable* in time, or in their nature *incompatible* with our destination; such conduct is cowardly and unmanly in the sight of Reason, it is criminal and culpable in the judgment of Christianity: for Christianity demands, not only the avoiding of evil, but zealous activity in the performance of good works.

Let us next consider the PRUDENCE, which the Apostle shewed as a Man, a Preacher, and a Writer.

In business of the world, St. Paul was careful to "provide for honest things, not "only in the sight of the Lord, but *also* in "the sight of men[40]." Hence he thought it not sufficient that to God alone should be manifest the integrity, with which he would distribute the sums collected from the Gentile converts for the use of the afflicted brethren in Judea; but he was anxious also to remove from men all possibility of suspicion, that the contributions might perhaps be ap-

[40] 2 Cor. viii. 21.

plied

plied to his own uſe: he therefore recommended it to the churches, that they ſhould ſend with him Titus and Luke[41], who might be witneſſes of his fidelity. The courting of popular favour by vicious compliances, is indeed an act of degrading meanneſs: but concern for the reputation of probity, and regard for that general eſteem which reſults from a virtuous character, are thought beneath the attention of none but either the moſt profligate or the moſt arrogant of mankind. DISC. X.

On occaſions which related to Jewiſh and Gentile converts, and to their ſcrupulous opinions, in matters of indifference he wiſely and humanely accommodated[42] himſelf to the prejudices of the weaker but well-meaning brethren. Did any think it unlawful to partake of ſacrifices which had been offered to idols? From ſuch meats he abſtained leſt he ſhould give offence[43], and

[41] 2 Cor. viii. 19.

[42] See Dr. PALEY's "Horæ Paulinæ," p. 411. edit. 1790. His Morality, &c.

[43] Rom. xiv. 21. 1 Cor. viii. 13.

DISC. X. induce others to do what in their conſciences they condemned. Did any conceive themſelves at liberty to eat all food whatſoever? With them he followed what his own judgment approved. Were any ſtill tenacious of Jewiſh ceremonies? Though in his full conviction that Moſaic ordinances were ſuperſeded by the Goſpel, he oppoſed the teachers who contended for the obſervance of them as requiſite to ſalvation; and though in his enlarged view of the Chriſtian Covenant he maintained [44], that as all diſtinction between Jew and Gentile had been removed, it was no longer neceſſary that the Gentile ſhould be obliged to live as the Jew, for the purpoſe of making mutual intercourſe between them lawful and proper; yet to ſatisfy the unlearned and humble, who wiſhed not to argue, but who deſired only to diſcharge what they imagined to be their duty,

[44] Gal. ii. 14. See "Horæ Paulinæ," p. 205. where the cauſe of the diſpute between St. Peter and St. Paul is placed in a proper light. See alſo WITSIUS's Remark, in the Appendix.

he

he would join[45] in rites the performing or omitting of which he knew to be of no material consequence. In reality, he was earnest to perfect the conversion of Jews and Gentiles; he did not therefore set himself with intemperate violence[46] to oppose all their sentiments on trivial questions (a mode of conduct which would have rendered him odious, and defeated his design); but he recommended himself to their esteem by seasonably and judiciously indulging their weakness, when the fundamental doctrines of Christianity were not endangered. And greatly would the harmony of human society be encreased, if in cases where the substantial parts of morality and religion are not concerned, we could practise the same mutual accommodation; as a previous measure to which desirable purpose, let us learn not to aggrandize trifles, not to raise into ima-

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[45] Και τα μεν γινομενα εναντια ην, ἡ δε γνωμη και ἡ διανοια, αφ' ἡς ταυτα εγινετο, σφοδρα ακολουθος και ἑαυτῃ συνημμενη· ἐν γαρ εζητεῖ, των ταυτα ακουοντων και ὁρῶντων σωτηριαν.

CHRYSOSTOM, vol. vii. p. 605. A. ed. Paris. 1616.

[46] See p. 193—199 in Bp. SHERLOCK's Discourse VII. vol. iv.

DISC. X. ginary and unneceſſary importance either actions or ſubjects, which when put in competition with ſome higher end, ſome more dignified concern, are in themſelves but of an inferior and ſecondary nature [47].

Whoever would either ſpeak or write to any effect, muſt conſider the age [48], condition, ſentiments, education, manners, and habits of the perſons to be addreſſed; and he muſt ſo adapt the topics of his diſcourſe or compoſition to the circumſtances that come neareſt every one's own knowledge, conceptions, and ſituation, that the force of the application may be immediately felt: and with quick diſcernment muſt he watch and ſeize the favourable [49] opportunity, when

[47] Under this perſuaſion it is, that St. Paul ſays to Timothy, "Fooliſh and unlearned queſtions avoid; knowing that they gender ſtrife." 2 Tim. ii. 23. See alſo 1 Tim. i. 4, 5. 1 Tim. iv. 7, 8. 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5. 20. 2 Tim. ii. 14, 15, 16. and Tit. i. 14. Tit. iii. 9.

[48] ARIST. Rhet. Oxf. ed. p. 107. b. ii. c. 12. and RICCOBONI's Paraphraſe, p. 230.

[49] Molliſſima tempora fandi. VIRG.

Non ſatis eſt igitur ſcire quid dicendum ſit, niſi conſilio diſpexeris, quando, apud quos, quomodo, quibus verbis, quo

when the prevailing argument may be urged with moſt ſucceſs. DISC. X.

As an Orator and a Writer[50], St. Paul particularly diſplayed his great prudence, in conſult-

quo ordine, quibus figuris, quo vultu, quo geſtu ſit dicendum.

ERASMI Eccleſiaſtæ, L. i. vol. v. p. 782. ed. 1704.

[50] In the opinion of MICHAELIS, St. Paul was enabled to ſpeak and write the Greek language with greater purity than what appears in his harangues and epiſtles: but he ſtudiouſly neglected elegance of diction, and adhered to the Alexandrine idiom of the Septuagint, with the view of gratifying the Jews.

See MICHAELIS's "Introduction to the New Teſta-"ment," tranſlated by MARSH, vol. i. c. iv. ſ. 8. p. 155. ed. 1793.

This ſacrifice of ability to a conſideration ſo important as that of gaining over the Jews to Chriſtianity, is the laudable condeſcenſion of a ſenſible and good man,

——— Parcentis viribus, atque
Extenuantis eas conſultò.

HOR. Sat. L. i. no. 13.

A ſtrong preſumption that St. Paul was converſant with the beſt Greek writers, ariſes from the general character given the people of Tarſus, for their application to polite learning; of which the Greek language was the vehicle, and Greek authors the teachers.

"So intent on the ſtudy of philoſophy, and the whole "circle of liberal arts, were the inhabitants of this city, "that they excelled even Athens, Alexandria, and every

DISC. X. conſulting the peculiar genius and diſpoſition of his audience; in raiſing his argument on ſubjects immediately preſent[51]; and in illuſtrating either his diſcourſe or epiſtle by alluſions to ſome ideas, laws, and cuſtoms, that were familiar to the people whom he wiſhed to convince.

" other place which can be mentioned as the ſeat of ſchools " and of reſidences for philoſophers and orators.

" Of the Stoics, Antipater, Archidemus, Neſtor, and " the two Athenodori, were from this city.

" Of thoſe, who went round to other cities, and eſta- " bliſhed ſchools in an able manner, were Plutiades and " Diogenes, from this place. Diogenes, like one divinely " inſpired, on any given ſubject ſpoke verſes extempora- " neous, chiefly in the tragic ſtyle.

" The grammarians Artemidorus and Diodorus, whoſe " treatiſes are ſtill extant; and the tragic poet Dionyſides, " who was the beſt of thoſe that from their number were " called " The Pleiades," were from this city."

STRABO, Lib. xiv. p. 463. ed. Caſaubon. 1587. See Diſcourſe XV. by Dr. POWELL, late Maſter of St. John's College, Cambridge.

[51] See this manner of teaching, which was uſual with our LORD, illuſtrated by NEWTON, in his " Obſervations " on the Prophecies of Daniel," part i. ch. ii. note (*a*). And by JORTIN, in his " Diſcourſes concerning the " Truth of the Chriſtian Religion." Diſc. VI. p. 230. ed. 4th.

When

When at Lyſtra the inhabitants would DISC. X.
have offered ſacrifices[52] to himſelf and Barnabas, he thence takes occaſion to teach them the firſt principle of all true Religion, the exiſtence of one living, almighty, and moſt gracious God!

The doctrines of St. Paul had been ridiculed at Athens by the Stoics and Epicureans. The former of theſe philoſophers contended for the eternity of matter and of the world; the latter maintained, that the world was made by a fortuitous concourſe of atoms, and that there would be no ſtate of future exiſtence. Opinions thus erroneous were not to be altogether unnoticed: yet neither was it practicable for the Apoſtle to combat the two ſects ſeparately, or to enter on a minute refutation of their reſpective principles. He adopts therefore a middle line ſuited to the occaſion. He ſo frames his diſcourſe, as that though in terms it appears general, yet in application it is oppoſed to one or other of the parties, the

[52] Acts, xiv. 13.

ſentiments

DISC. X. ſentiments of which he meant to correct. He aſſerts it was "God that made the "world and all things therein;" and, that "He has appointed a day, in which He "will judge the world in righteouſneſs[53]." From theſe declarations, the Stoics on the one hand, and the Epicureans on the other, might each[54] be led to inferences directly contradicting their own peculiar tenets; yet neither could reaſonably take offence, becauſe neither ſect was expreſsly named, nor avowedly attacked.

In the Areopagus he was to clear himſelf from the charge of introducing ſtrange and new demon-gods[55]. He defends himſelf by ſaying, it was not his intention to introduce ſuch gods, for he perceived the people of

[53] Acts, xvii. 24—31.

[54] See DODDRIDGE's Note on Acts, xvii. 18: and the beginning of Dr. BENTLEY's ſecond Diſcourſe at BOYLE's Lectures. See alſo Dr. BENTLEY's Third Diſcourſe, in which he remarks, "it is manifeſt from this chapter alone, "(Acts xvii.) if nothing elſe had been now extant, that "St. Paul was a great Maſter in all the learning of the "Greeks."

[55] Acts, xvii. 18.

Athens

Athens were already somewhat too[56] much addicted to the worship of those deities: his object was to direct their religious disposition to the worship of that UNKNOWN GOD, whom they honoured with an altar; that God, who is the Lord of heaven and earth, and the Maker of all men, as even one of their own poets acknowledged[57]. In this turn from the ground of their accusation against him to the doctrine he wished to inculcate, and in this mode of reasoning first from the altar[58] which the Athenians them-

DISC. X.

[56] See PARKHURST's Lexicon. V. δεισιδαιμονεστερος, and Dissertation VI. p. i. s. 22. prefixed to "The Four Gospels translated," by Dr. GEORGE CAMPBELL. 1789.

Laudare voluit Athenienses, quòd pro copiâ cognitionis suæ religiosi essent, ut eâ insinuatione aditum sibi pararet ad eos docendos rectiora.

See POOLE's Synopsis Criticorum in Act. 17. 22.

See Note to Lord LITTLETON's "Conversion of St. "Paul," p. 60.

[57] See a passage in Bp. SHERLOCK's Discourse IV. vol. i. p. 164. ed. 1764. in which is drawn a very striking comparison between Socrates and St. Paul, when pleading before the Areopagites.

[58] Εισηλθεν εις την πολιν ὁ Παυλος· ευρε βωμον εν ᾧ επεγεγραπτο, Αγνωστῳ Θεῳ. Τι ουν ποιησει; Ἑλληνες παντες ησαν, ασεβεις παντες.

DISC. X. themselves had inscribed, and then, from writings which they read and admired, there is singular dexterity, by means of which was given him an opportunity for the preaching of repentance and a future retribution by Jesus Christ, whom God had raised from the dead.

It is however to be observed, that the Apostle does not mention the name of Christ, as the person by whom God would judge the world; nor does he yet, as was his practice before converts already instructed in Christianity, exalt the Divine nature of our Blessed Redeemer in the sublime terms with which, on many occasions, he endeavours to express the great conceptions of his mind on that glorious subject. To the Athenians, ignorant of the Scriptures, ignorant of prophecy, ignorant of

παντες. τι ουν εχρην ποιησαι; απο ευαγγελιων διαλεχθηναι; αλλα κατηγελων. αλλ' απο προφητικων; και των τω Νομω γραμματων; αλλ' ουκ επιστευον. Τι ουν εποιησεν; επι τον βημον εβαμε, και απο των οπλων των πολεμιων αυτους εχειρωσατο.

CHRYSOSTOM, v. vii. 651. C.

See ERASMI Opera, V. v. p. 99. 781. 1065. Ed. 1704.

true

true Godhead, he ſpeaks only of "that "Man whom God had ordained." The reaſon is obvious. For idolaters, it was neceſſary to prepare the way, by firſt perſuading them to turn from idols and ſerve the living God. Nor God himſelf did St. Paul yet deſcribe by the appellation, familiar indeed to the Jews, but to the Athenians unknown, "the God of Abraham, of Iſaac, "and of Jacob." He ſimply ſets forth the exiſtence of that God, "who made the "world, and all things therein." When God were acknowledged by this general character, it would then, but not more early, be ſeaſonable to proceed farther, and unfold the particular manner in which He had revealed himſelf to a peculiar people[59].

DISC. X.

The ſubjects of his firſt diſcourſes at Corinth were but the elements[60] of Chriſtian-

[59] For the ſubſtance of this paragraph, ſee the Works of ERASMUS, vol. v. p. 1065. fol. ed. Lugduni, 1704. Eccleſiaſtæ, Lib. iii.

[60] Quum ſcriberet (St. Paulus) rudibus adhuc, et nuper Chriſto initiatis, myſteria quædam magis attigit, quàm tractavit, et indicavit veriùs quàm explicavit, videlicet tempori ſerviens. ERASMI Op. v. vii. p. 771.

ity.

DISC. X. ity. The sublime doctrines were judiciously reserved for a season of more perfect maturity in the habits and practices required by the Gospel.

At Jerusalem St. Paul was placed before the Sanhedrim, that the chief priests and rulers of the Jews might examine into the grounds of the accusation against him, and might then inform the Roman Tribune of the cause which excited the people to treat him with such violence. No sooner had the Apostle uttered a single sentence in vindication of his innocence, than, contrary to all law and justice, he was smitten on the mouth, by command of the High Priest. Thus at the very beginning of the defence he was preparing to offer, he was obstructed by an act of indecent outrage; whence it evidently appeared that his judges were determined at all events to condemn and oppress him. Farther efforts to give an account of his whole conduct, and to lay open before them the manner of his conversion, would have been ineffectual in so prejudiced an assembly. And it was manifestly im-

poſſible for him to enter at once on the Di- DISC.
vine Miſſion of Chriſt and the call of the X.
Gentiles, before perſons who would not have heard with patience the bare mention of Chriſt; for they were exaſperated when he did but proteſt his conſciouſneſs of no guilt, that could warrant the treatment he had experienced. If ſuch was their anger at a declaration, which every perſon unjuſtly inſulted would naturally urge in his own behalf, there could be no doubt that an immediate and unſeaſonable attempt to proclaim Chriſt and Univerſal Acceptance through him, would have inſtantly driven them into the moſt intemperate fury. What then was it expedient, or practicable, or poſſible for the Apoſtle to do in ſuch a ſituation, where he could not even be heard on the points he wiſhed to enforce? His Prudence ſuggeſted that at leaſt he ſhould try the effect of one topic, which, if admitted, might lead to other truths. The ſubject then he ſelected for this purpoſe, a ſubject indeed on which he founded the neceſſity of embracing Chriſtianity, was the certainty

DISC. X. certainty[61] of a reſurrection. His avowal of this doctrine commanded the attention of ſome among his audience; it was acceptable to the Phariſees, who thence became his advocates, and propoſed that he ſhould be diſmiſſed without injury.

The polite exordium[62] of his defence before Agrippa was well calculated to conciliate[63] favour; and his final apoſtrophe[64] produced ſuch an effect, that the king of Judea himſelf confeſſed he was almoſt converted to Chriſtianity[65].

Before the chief Jews at Rome, St. Paul thought it neceſſary to explain the cauſe

[61] Acts, xxiii. 6. [62] Acts, xxvi. 2.

[63] See QUINTILIAN, L. iv. c. i. ſ. 2. 5. Judicem conciliabimus, &c.

[64] See MICHAELIS's "Introduction to the New Teſta-"ment," v. i. c. iv. ſect. 8. p. 157. ed. 1793. In c. ii. ſ. 10. p. 48. of the ſame volume, there is a juſt account of St. PAUL's very extraordinary talents.

[65] Acts, xxvi. 28, 9.

Εν ολιγῳ, &c. Eſt locutio bene Græca: nam et Plato dixit in Apologetico Εγωιν αν και περι των ποιητων εν ολιγῳ τουτο *Prope idem de Poetis cognovi.* GROT.

Και εν ολιγῳ και εν πολλῳ *et propemodum et admodum (in pauco et in multo*, id eſt, omnino, vel omni ex parte.) GLASS. Quoted from POOLE's Synopſis.

which

which had occaſioned his being ſent thither as a priſoner. He had appealed to Cæſar, that he might eſcape the danger of a confederacy, in which more than forty[66] perſons had by oath bound themſelves to kill him. Senſible, however, that perhaps this exculpation of himſelf might have the appearance of criminating the people of Judea, and might thus offend the brethren at Rome, he averts their diſpleaſure by diſclaiming all intention[67] of accuſing his countrymen in what he had ſaid to vindicate himſelf. By this well-timed diſavowal, he guarded againſt the prejudice, which a wrong impreſſion received at their firſt meeting might have left on their minds, and might have made them at once irreconcileable enemies to himſelf and doctrine. DISC. X.

At the time in which he wrote them his epiſtle, St. Paul was not perſonally known to the Roman converts. He uſes not, therefore, to them the language of authority[68], or the tone of reprehenſion; but

[66] Acts, xxiii. 21. [67] Acts, xxviii. 19.

[68] See "Horæ Paulinæ," p. 60.

DISC. X. rather endeavours to convince them by argument, and conciliate them by terms of affection.

He was well acquainted with the ferocity of the Roman diſpoſition. At the beginning, therefore, of his epiſtle he ſtudies to ſoften it by giving them, what indeed they deſerved, commendation for their faith. He charges on the nature of men in general the ſin of idolatry, and the vices which attend it; nor till towards the cloſe of the ſixth chapter does he intimate to the Romans, that before their converſion they themſelves were addicted to thoſe ſins, of which they were then aſhamed [69].

He was compelled to demonſtrate, that not Gentiles only, but Jews alſo were alike morally guilty before God moſt holy! He foreſaw, however, that the declaration of this truth would excite in his Jewiſh brethren diſpleaſure and reſentment. How then could he point out the ſtate of their depravity, in a manner the leaſt offenſive poſſibly

[69] From ERASMUS, vol. v. p. 99. fol. ed. 1704, Lugduni.—"Ratio Veræ Theologiæ."

to

to be conceived? He has recourſe to this expedient: he appeals to their ſacred writings; quotes words from them; and leaves the Jews to infer their own vicious character from the deſcription which the Pſalmiſt gives of their forefathers [70].

DISC. X.

When he would exhort the Romans to abandon their vices and practiſe holineſs, he repreſents them as having been ſlaves [71] in their unconverted ſtate, but as men delivered from bondage ſince they had become Chriſtians. Thus, by alluſion to the different conditions of bondmen and free, with which they were ſo well acquainted, he excited in them ſtrong and adequate conceptions of that ſervitude to corrupt appetites under which the profligate are ſubjugated, and of that perfect emancipation from the tyranny of ſuch affections, which the ſober and religious enjoy.

Does he addreſs the Corinthians? He animates them to purſue heavenly bleſſings,

[70] See Dr. MACKNIGHT's Note on Rom. iii. 28.

[71] Rom. vi. 16. Ibid. viii. 15—21.

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by reference to thoſe who contended in the games [72] which were celebrated amongſt them, and with peculiar aptitude, to them makes uſe of agoniſtic terms. Leſt their principles ſhould be corrupted by too familiar intimacy with men indifferent to a future ſtate, he admoniſhes them to beware of profligate companions, by citing an appoſite paſſage from a favourite and popular Greek comic writer [73]. Recollecting that the people to whom he was writing were well verſed in philoſophy, he expreſſes himſelf after the manner of a Pythagorean in this paſſage; "for we know, that if our "earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſ-"ſolved, we have a building from God [74]." Probably too he had in his mind the paradoxes of the Stoics, when he introduces

[72] 1 Cor. ix. 24. See Pindar Olymp. Od. xiii. Πλοκοι στεφανων εν Ισθμιασι. Nem. Od. ii. Κορινθιων υπο φωτων, &c. In vol. iii. p. 201. of Biſhop HORNE's Sermons, there is an ingenious diſcourſe on St. Paul's agoniſtic terms.

[73] Menander. 1 Cor. xv. 33.

[74] 2 Cor. v. 1. Some commentators are of opinion, that St. Paul in this paſſage illuſtrates his ſubject by a metaphor taken from the buſineſs of tent-making, in which the Corinthians had ſeen him employed.

theſe

theſe contrarieties reſpecting himſelf and his fellow-labourers in the miniſtry; "as "deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, yet "well known; as dying, and behold we "live; as chaſtened, and not killed; as "ſorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as "poor, yet making many rich; as hav-"ing nothing, yet poſſeſſing all things[75]." The city of Corinth was celebrated for its braſs[76]: the inanity therefore of endowments in language to him who hath not the ſpirit of Chriſtian benevolence, he expreſſes by the metaphor of "ſounding braſs." In this manner he appropriates his images to the particular people who are the immediate objects of his Epiſtle. DISC. X.

To the Epheſians, who greatly admired the beauty of Diana's Temple, which was the ornament of their city, he conveys an idea of the union which ſubſiſted between Jews and Gentiles with Chriſt their Head,

[75] See Dr. MACKNIGHT's Note on 2 Cor. vi. 10. For other inſtances of the ſame kind, ſee 2 Cor. iv. 8. and xii. 10, 11.

[76] Ephyreïaque æra. Virg. Georg. ii. 464.

DISC. X. by intimating the reſemblance it hath to the well-proportioned ſymmetry of a compact building [77]; and probably it is in alluſion to the ſame Temple, that he deſcribes the enlarged comprehenſion of Chriſt's univerſal church, in words applicable to the dimenſions of an edifice [78].

The charge againſt St. Paul before the magiſtrates at Philippi was, that "he taught new cuſtoms [79]," which the people, who were a Roman colony [80], could not admit, without danger of incurring diſpleaſure from the Senate and Emperor. Fearing leſt their Roman citizenſhip might perhaps be forfeited, if they innovated in religion, the multitude were exaſperated againſt the Apoſtle, and the magiſtrates commanded

[77] Eph. ii. 20.

[78] Eph. iii. 17, 18. See Dr. MACKNIGHT's Note. "I ſubmit it to my readers, (ſays Dr. MACKNIGHT,) "whether the Apoſtle, by repreſenting the Goſpel in this "Epiſtle no leſs than five times, under the idea of a *myſtery*, "did not mean to lead the Epheſians to compare it with "their own myſteries."

Preface to the Epiſtle to the Epheſ. ſec. 3.

[79] Acts, xvi. 21. [80] Acts, xvi. 12.

that

that he ſhould be puniſhed and impriſoned without legal condemnation. From his confinement, proper officers were ſent to diſmiſs him: but St. Paul then aſſerted his Roman citizenſhip; and demanded, that as the magiſtrates had groſsly violated his civil rights, they ſhould come in perſon to lead him from the priſon, and thus compenſate the inſult offered him, by a public mark of reſpectful attention. A fact ſo uncommon muſt have made an impreſſion on the minds of the Philippians, and muſt have increaſed their eſtimation of a privilege, which could authoriſe even an oppreſſed ſtranger to dictate ſuch conditions to their governors. It is either in alluſion to that exceſſive concern, which prompted the Philippians in general to prefer the favour of Rome to the light of truth; or it is with reference to the claim made by himſelf, that he bids [81] the Philip-

DISC. X.

[81] Μονον αξιως του Ευαγγελιου ΠΟΛΙΤΕΥΕΣΘΕ, ἱνα ειτε ελθων. και ἰδων ὑμας, ειτε απων ακουσω, τα περι ὑμων, ὁτι ΣΤΗΚΕΤΕ ἐν ἑνι πνευματι, μια ψυχη συναθλουντες τη πιστει Ευαγγελιε, και ΜΗ ΠΤΥΡΟΜΕΝΟΙ ἐν μηδενι ὑπο των αντικειμενων. Phil. i. 27.

DISC. X. pian converts act with firmneſs in their ſufferings, as becomes denizens of a city, the loſs of which would be infinitely more ſerious than excluſion from Roman privileges. He aſſures [82] them that ſincere Chriſtians are already conſidered as bearing to a future ſtate, that municipal relation which citizens have towards any metropolis in this world; and that they are entitled to a p[illegible] beyond compariſon more valuable than any which Rome could beſtow, the privilege of expecting to be bleſſed by Chriſt, with bodies incorruptible and happineſs immortal.

[82] *Ημων γαρ* ΠΟΛΙΤΕΥΜΑ *εν ουρανοις υπαρχει.* Phil. iii. 20.
" This ſenſe the place bears well, if we underſtand this " citizenſhip to be paralleled only with ſuch an one as that " of Rome was, and by the pleading of which St. Paul " was reſcued from the ſcourging he otherwiſe had ſuffered " at *Jeruſalem*. The magiſtrates and ſerjeants of this city, " *Philippi*, were put, we know, in a great fright, for having " violated that privilege in the perſon of our Apoſtle. And " to that claim of his, ſo univerſally allowed, and there " ſo remarkably made, now, in an Epiſtle to thoſe *Philip-* " *pians*, he may be well thought to allude."
Bp. HOOKER's Sixth Sermon, on Phil. iii. 20. folio edition, p. 652.

The

The character of the Cretans, the Apoſtle delineates in the very words of an author [83], whom themſelves revered as a perſon inſpired [84]. Nothing could tend more fully to convince Titus [85], that the people with whom he was reſiding were notoriouſly vicious, than the teſtimony which was borne againſt them even by their own countrymen. DISC. X.

The Apoſtle exhorts both Titus and Timothy to "rebuke [86]" offenders: but, with his uſual diſcrimination of character, he qualifies his advice according to the different tempers of the two miniſters. To the one

[83] "EPIMENIDES is the author of the verſe, who was a "Prophet not only in the ſenſe that all Poets are ſo called, "but a pretender alſo to *enthuſiaſm* and *prophecy*, in the "ſtricter ſenſe, as *Cicero* tells us in his book of *Divination*, "and owned as ſuch among the Heathens, even the more "learned of them." Bp. BULL's Tenth Sermon.

The ingenious Diſcourſe, from which this paſſage is taken, exhorts Miniſters of the Goſpel to make themſelves acquainted not only with ſacred, but alſo with other kinds of learning. See WITSIUS, in the Appendix.

[84] CIC. de Divinat. l. i. ſec. 18. [85] Tit. i. 5—12.

[86] Tit. i. 13. and ii. 15. 2 Tim. iv. 2.

he

DISC. X. he ſays, "rebuke ſharply[87]," and "with "authority[88]:" to the other he ſubjoins, "exhort with all long-ſuffering[89]." The diſpoſition of Timothy was probably more ardent[90] than that of Titus; ſuitable, therefore, to him was the admonition, which to Titus was not neceſſary.

The regaining of his maſter's favour for Oneſimus required the utmoſt delicacy of addreſs. Philemon was firſt to be intereſted in behalf of St. Paul, who was to make the requeſt. Such circumſtances in his condition as could engage the attention and move the heart of Philemon in the ſtrongeſt manner, were to be previouſly brought forward for that purpoſe. No conſiderations would probably be more forcible than the age and enchainment of the Apoſtle: theſe[91], therefore, are adduced and urged with that view. The way was next to be prepared for the mention of Oneſimus. An abrupt intro-

[87] Tit. i. 13. [88] Tit. ii. 15. [89] 2 Tim. iv. 2.

[90] See Dr. DODDRIDGE's Note on Tit. i. 13. and Dr. MACKNIGHT's Preface to Titus, ſec. 5.

[91] Philemon, ver. 9.

duction

duction of his name might have given Philemon diſguſt: St. Paul, therefore, proceeds with an entreaty for one whom he calls "his own ſon [92]," one whom by converſion he had "begotten." After ſpeaking of this perſon in terms ſo affectionate, he concludes Philemon will be anxious to know who it might be, that is ſo warmly recommended by him. At length [93], therefore, he ventures to add, "Oneſimus." Still, however, apprehenſive leſt Philemon ſhould be ſomewhat diſinclined to receive Oneſimus with cordiality on the recollection of his delinquency, he touches on his miſdemeanour with a tender hand, and ſoftens the appellation with which rigorous juſtice might have upbraided him; immediately adding an aſſurance, which implied the ſincere repentance of this now converted ſlave, "who in time paſt was to "thee unprofitable, but now profitable to "thee and me [94]." In order to make his application yet more ſucceſsful, he appeals

DISC. X.

[92] Phil. ver. 10. [93] See the original text, ver. 10.
[94] Ver. 11.

to

DISC. X. to the piety and Chriſtian charity of Philemon: his piety is directed to diſcern the mercy of God's providence in educing good from evil; his charity is called on to rejoice that Oneſimus is become a convert; "perhaps he therefore departed for a ſeaſon, that thou ſhouldſt receive him for ever; not now as a ſervant, but above a ſervant, a brother beloved [95]." In which words, the abſence of Oneſimus from his maſter is not marked with a harſh term; it is repreſented merely as a ſeparation. The point which St. Paul earneſtly endeavoured to accompliſh, was to remove from the mind of Philemon every impreſſion unfavourable to Oneſimus; and no language could have been uſed on ſuch an occaſion, more perſuaſive or more ſkilfully arranged, than what we find in this conciliatory letter [96].

On the Epiſtle to the Hebrews it will not be ſufficient to make only ſome curſory

[95] Ver. 15, 16.

[96] Theſe remarks are in great meaſure ſuggeſted by Dr. MACKNIGHT's Notes on v. 10, and 15. of this Epiſtle.

remarks.

remarks. The ſubjects diſcuſſed in it are of ſuch importance, as to demand at leaſt that degree of our attention, which may be requiſite for giving a ſuccinct account of them. The Apoſtle then, with the moſt profound veneration towards our LORD and SAVIOUR, begins his Epiſtle with aſſerting the divine nature and exalted dignity of the Perſon who had delivered unto men the laſt revelation of God's will; a nature and dignity which far ſurpaſſed even that of Angels, and which, therefore, by inference, the Hebrews were to conclude was at a diſtance ineffably above that of Moſes. He warns his countrymen to beware of diſobeying a revealer of God's will, who was ſo divinely authoritative, and yet ſo merciful and compaſſionate to mankind. He raiſes their fears, leſt they through apoſtacy ſhould be excluded from the eternal reſt of a future life, as their forefathers, through miſtruſt of God's veracity and power, were excluded from reſt in the land of Canaan. He inveſtigates the figurative ſimilitude between Chriſt and Melchiſedec, with

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DISC. X. with reſpect to their Prieſthood, and proves Chriſt a High Prieſt as far ſuperior to Aaron and his deſcendants, as Melchiſedec was to Abraham. He points out the neceſſity which required a Prieſthood better than the Levitical; a Prieſthood ſuch as Chriſt's, from eternity in its beginning, and to the conſummation of all things in its duration. He infers as an unavoidable conſequence, that from a change of the Prieſthood enſues alſo a change of the Law; a change from carnal to ſpiritual, *i. e.* from ceremonial obſervances to mental holineſs. He reſumes his proofs of Chriſt's ſuperiority to the Levitical prieſts, particularly from the conſideration of his being an Interceſſor ever living, a High Prieſt "who is ſet at the right hand of the "throne of the Majeſty in the heavens." He ſuggeſts to them, that God himſelf had declared he would eſtabliſh with them a new covenant, which ſhould influence their minds and hearts, ſhould inſtruct them to know, and excite them to love God; and that he would be merciful to their ſins. He explains the emblematical and typical meaning

meaning of the former Moſaic Tabernacles, and tells them the realities which the Tabernacle ſervice prefigured. He ſhews them how infinitely more efficacious towards the obtaining of pardon for ſinners, muſt be the entering of Chriſt into Heaven, than the annual entering of the Jewiſh High Prieſt into the Holy of Holies, could poſſibly be. Illuſtrating farther the view to which the Tabernacles looked, he argues, that as the ſprinkling of blood was ordained for the ſanctifying of all things uſed therein, ſo it was fit that the ſhedding of blood more precious than that of animals, even the blood of Chriſt, ſhould be appointed for the opening of Heaven to believers; Heaven being in its nature ſo unſpeakably more excellent than the Moſaic Tabernacles, which, with their ſervice, were but repreſentative emblems of Heaven and of the atoning ſacrifice to be made by Chriſt. Into Heaven, that true Tabernacle, Chriſt hath entered as a great High Prieſt, by the ſacrifice not of animals, but of himſelf: and as the Levitical Prieſts returned from the

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DISC. X. Tabernacle to bleſs the people, ſo Chriſt will return from Heaven to confer immortal happineſs on thoſe who renounce not his religion. The Apoſtle proceeds to demonſtrate, that as all the Tabernacle ſervices were but emblematical, ſo the ſacrifices were but figurative of ſomething more efficacious, and therefore in themſelves were incapable of procuring pardon for moral guilt. This concluſion he farther confirms, by reaſoning, firſt, on the annual repetition of thoſe ſacrifices, (which had been unneceſſary were pardon already obtained,) and then, on the impoſſibility of making atonement for ſin by the blood of animals. He then reminds the Hebrews of the words ſpoken by Meſſiah himſelf, declaring that his own body ſhould be ſacrificed according to the will of God; and that thenceforth Levitical ſacrifices ſhould ceaſe as unneceſſary, and as no longer according to God's will. He maintains, that by the will of God likewiſe, thoſe who ſo believe [97]

[97] Compare ver. 9. ch. x. with ver. 9. ch. v. of this Epiſtle.

as to obey the Goſpel, are accounted right- DISC.
eous through the one propitiation made by X.
Chriſt once for all: which propitiation being ſo effectual, Chriſt does not (as the Jewiſh prieſts did) renew the ſacrifice; but remains in heaven exalted to the higheſt dignity, until he ſhall have ſubjected to his dominion all wicked ſpirits and ſinful men. In firm reliance on ſuch a High Prieſt and atoning Redeemer, he exhorts the Jewiſh converts to hold faſt that faith, which led them to hope for ſalvation through Chriſt: in order to which ſtedfaſt continuance in faith, he inculcates on them the exciting of each other to benevolence and good works, and the frequent aſſembling of themſelves together for the purpoſe of religious worſhip. He cautions them againſt apoſtacy, by an aſſurance that if they renounce the benefits of Chriſt's ſacrifice, there is no other ſacrifice of which they can avail themſelves for the obtaining of God's pardon. He reverts to his argument before adduced; and bids them conſider, that if diſobedience to the Law of God,

DISC. X. when delivered through Moſes, was puniſhable with death, contempt of God's will when revealed by his SON, and renouncing of a covenant ſo highly ſanctioned, muſt incur more dreadful vengeance; even that of eternal miſery in a future ſtate. He animates them to perſeverance, that they may attain their final reward for having obeyed the will of God in embracing and maintaining the Goſpel: and to increaſe their faith in God's veracity for the performance of his promiſe, which propoſed a final reward, he ſets before them, in a noble and eloquent ſtyle of compoſition, the examples of their forefathers who had manifeſted unſhaken faith in God, and points out the effects which that faith wrought in them. He encourages them to recollect theſe examples, and to conſider themſelves as acting in the ſight of their anceſtors, but more particularly ſo in the ſight of Chriſt, whoſe patience they ſhould imitate. They are furthermore reminded from their own Scriptures, that afflictions are by God permitted to fall on us for our own

own ſpiritual advantage: and they are urged, neither through fear of ſufferings, nor for indulgence in vicious pleaſures, to forfeit an inheritance reſerved for them when they ſhould come "unto "Mount Sion, and unto the city of the "living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem; "and to an innumerable company of "angels; to the general aſſembly and "church of the firſt-born, which are "written in heaven; and to God the "Judge of all; and to the ſpirits of juſt "men made perfect; and to Jeſus the "mediator of the new covenant." Again he reverts to the weighty conſideration enforced above, viz. that if diſobedience to God, when ſpeaking by Moſes, was attended with puniſhment, diſobedience, when he ſpeaks by his Son, would incur more ſevere puniſhment. And to convince them more fully that the Moſaic diſpenſation was now ſuperſeded by the Goſpel covenant, he proves to them from their own prophetical writings, that God predicted the abrogation of the one, and the eſtabliſhment of the

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DISC. X. other, the latter of which was to continue in force to the end of the world. Finally, being perſuaded that his concluding words would make the deepeſt impreſſion; after having intimated that thoſe, who ſtill perſiſted in relying on Levitical ſacrifices, could not partake of the benefits which Chriſt's death would impart to ſuch as ſought for pardon through him; he thus prays: "the "God of peace, who brought again from "the dead our Lord Jeſus, that great ſhep-"herd of the ſheep, through the blood of "the everlaſting covenant, make you per-"fect in every good work to do his will, "working in you that which is well-pleaſ-"ing in his ſight, through Jeſus Chriſt: "to whom be glory for ever and ever. "Amen."

Such is the ſubſtance of this Epiſtle, an Epiſtle valuable, becauſe replete with learning[98], deep in explanation, energetic in language.

If

[98] Whether this Epiſtle were, or were not written by St. Paul, yet, if it be allowed an early date, an important inference may be drawn from it, viz. that in the commencement

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If we look into it for inſtances of the Apoſtle's judgment in adapting himſelf to the perſons with whom he is correſponding, we may remark on the opening of this Epiſtle that it begins in a manner no where elſe obſervable in his writings. It was uſual with him on other occaſions to prefix his name and aſſert his miniſtry [99]; and this he

mencement of the Chriſtian æra, the Jews agreed with Chriſtians in their interpretation and application of many prophecies to the Meſſiah: for it cannot be conceived, that an Epiſtle to the Hebrews would appeal to ſuch paſſages, if they had not generally been underſtood as referring to Him.

[99] See Millii Prolegomena, p. xii. col. 1. Apoſtolo jam haud cum Gentilibus res erat, quorum Apoſtolus peculiari Dei deſignatione factus erat, ac ad quos proinde quoties ſcripſit, auctoritatis ergo, ſeipſum ipſorum Doctorem et Apoſtolum in literis vocat, διακονιαν ſuam δοξαζων; ſed cum Eccleſiâ Hieroſolymitanâ.

Paulus igitur, quo declinaret omnem invidiam, abſque omni nominis ac tituli præfatione aggreſſus eſt argumentum quod in hâc Epiſtolâ fuſiùs explicandum ſuſcepit; illudque ita ſimpliciter expoſuit, ut ſedulò caveret, ne uſquam Apoſtoli auctoritatem arrogare ſibi videretur.

Dr. Owen is of opinion, that although the avoiding of prejudices againſt him may be deemed *ſufficient* reaſon for St. Paul's ſuppreſſing his name, yet that this account of his ſilence does not contain "the *whole* cauſe of the omiſſion

DISC. X. he did with the utmoſt propriety, when he was to inſtruct Gentiles, whoſe Apoſtle he was appointed by particular direction. But here we find no ſuch prefatory declaration. Leſt by aſſuming an appearance of authority over thoſe, to whom in fact he was not an Apoſtle, and who perhaps had embraced Chriſtianity before his own converſion, he ſhould create diſguſt, he deſignedly omits his cuſtomary introduction, and at once enters on the ſubjects to be diſcuſſed.

Another inſtance of ſimilar judgment in adaptation, is in the ſelection of topics uſed

of an Apoſtolical ſalutation in the entrance" of this Epiſtle. He conceives, therefore, that "as in his other Epiſtles St. "Paul propoſeth his *Apoſtolical authority* as the immediate "reaſon of their aſſent and obedience, ſo in this he doth "the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament. And this is the "*the true and proper cauſe* that renders the prefixing of his "*Apoſtolical authority*, which his name muſt neceſſarily ac-"company, needleſs, becauſe uſeleſs, it being that which "he intended not to engage in this buſineſs."

Dr. OWEN's "Exercitations on the Epiſtle "to the Hebrews." Ex. 2. 19.

See Dr. MACKNIGHT's "New Literal Tranſlation of the "Apoſtolical Epiſtles." Preface to the Ep. to the Hebrews, S. 1, 2. p. 325. V. 3. Edition containing the Greek Text.

throughout

throughout this Epiſtle. The ſubjects, the quotations, the references, the interpretations, are all ſuited to the ſacred knowledge, the train of thinking, the caſt of mind, peculiar to the people, whom he laboured to ſecure from apoſtaſy, the converted Hebrews [100].

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Such

[100] The date of this Epiſtle we can ſo far aſcertain, as to know aſſuredly that it was written before the year of our Lord 70 was completed. For we read in it thus: Ch. viii. 4. "For, if he were on earth, he ſhould not be a prieſt, ſeeing that *there are prieſts who offer gifts* according to the law." Ch. ix. 25. "Nor yet that he ſhould offer himſelf often, as *the high prieſt entereth into the holy place every year*, with the blood of others." Ch. x. 3. "But in thoſe ſacrifices, *there is a remembrance again made of ſins every year*." Ch. xiii. 11. "For the bodies of thoſe beaſts, whoſe blood *is brought* into the ſanctuary by the high prieſt for ſin, *are burnt* without the camp." From theſe ſeveral paſſages it is evident, that the Temple at Jeruſalem was ſtill ſtanding, and that the Temple ſervice was in full force among the unconverted Jews, when this Epiſtle was written.

On the ground of this certainty we may reſt the following concluſions:

1. The learning diſplayed in this Epiſtle is of ſuch a nature, as could not be expected, nor *probably* found at that æra, in any perſon who had not been educated a Jew.

2. The application of that learning to the purpoſe of exalting and enforcing Chriſtianity is ſo very pertinent and

DISC. X. Such then, on various occaſions, was the prudence of St. Paul as a man, as a preacher,

earneſt, that no one ſtill continuing a Jew could *poſſibly* have made it.

3. The writer then *had been* a Jew, but was converted to Chriſtianity.

4. But theſe circumſtances preciſely correſpond with the character of St. Paul.

5. It is true indeed, theſe circumſtances of correſpondence cannot be brought in proof that St. Paul *did* write this Epiſtle; they will however at leaſt warrant a preſumption that he *might* have written it.

6. When to this preſumption we add, that the hiſtorical incidents mentioned in C. x. 34. and xiii. 23, 24. concerning the chains the writer had been wearing, the departure of Timotheus, and the country whence the Epiſtle was ſent, all agree with St. Paul's condition and connexions; that the general ſubject, the manner of treating the ſubject, the Rabbinical mode of quotation, the phraſeology, the doctrines maintained and the duties inculcated in it, are all ſuch as we might expect, becauſe ſimilar to what we find in other writings of St. Paul; when, moreover, we take into conſideration that the Epiſtle to the Hebrews was always received as St. Paul's by all the Greek Fathers: this accumulation of evidence, though it be in the greater part *collateral*, and only in the teſtimony of the Greek Fathers *poſitive*, yet does it afford us ſtronger reaſons for receiving this Epiſtle as authentic, than can be furniſhed by arguments on the other ſide, for rejecting it as not genuine.

In Ch. vi. ver. 9. of this Epiſtle, is an inſtance of that *manner*, which is obſervable in St. Paul's writings. It is, the

preacher, and a writer; and from the effects of his prudence we may conclude how expedient it is for us to make a diſcreet uſe of our abilities. From his practice it is to be inferred, that if we deſire to benefit either ourſelves or others by our ſeveral talents, yet however laudable may be the object we have in view, we muſt not adopt preciſely the ſame method of exerting thoſe talents in all caſes

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the care he takes to ſoften the harſh expreſſions he had juſt been compelled to uſe. See Dr. MACKNIGHT on this paſſage; in whoſe note is made a reference to 2 Theſſ. i. 13. and Eph. iv. 20. See alſo "Horæ Paulinæ" p. 60. and 1 Cor. vi. 11.—2 Cor. ii. 5. For the authenticity of the Epiſtle, from this ſimilarity of *manner*, ariſes a proof, which though by itſelf not of great force, yet when added to others may deſerve conſideration as tending to corroborate, "Si das hoc, parvis quoque rebus magna juvari." A. P. 125.

The learned reader may conſult WITSII MELETEMATA Sect. 12. 18. ſeqq. WOLFII CURÆ PHILOLOGICÆ in Epiſtolam ad HEBRÆOS: Dr. OWEN's EXERCITATIO II. ſ. 26, 27. and more eſpecially Mr. JAMES PIERCE's Introduction to his Paraphraſe on this Epiſtle. Edition 1734, p. vi. ix. xiv. xvi. xx. xxi. xxxii.

On the authenticity of St. Paul's Epiſtles in general, ſee ſome pertinent remarks by Archbp. SECKER, Vol. vii. Serm. 8. p. 170. Ed. 1771.

indiſ-

DISC. X. indiſcriminately and without regard to time, place, or other contingent circumſtances: for if our zeal to do good anticipate the ſeaſon and miſtake the means of doing it, our purpoſe will be fruſtrated by our own injudicious precipitancy [101].

Nor, becauſe in ſome reſpects it is utterly impoſſible, and in others perhaps altogether improbable, that we ſhould ever be placed in circumſtances reſembling the Apoſtle's, are we therefore to imagine his example in this inſtance is not pertinent, nor calculated for the purpoſe of directing our conduct. To thoſe, who are much converſant with the affairs of life, there frequently happen occurrences which demand the exerciſe of prudence. How to under-

[101] "In morality (ſays Dr. JORTIN) there is a practical "knowledge, or the art of making a right uſe of good "abilities and good diſpoſitions."—"In matters of reli- "gion, though virtue belongs to all times and places; yet "for particular virtues there are particular ſeaſons and "occaſions more exactly ſuitable." "Virtue, in general, "is a good habit, always permanent, and fixed in the "heart; but the diſcreet exerciſe of it requires diſcern- "ment and application, and Chriſtian knowledge conſiſts "in this diſcernment." Vol. vii. § 9. p. 181. Ed. 1776.

take

take and how to purſue; when to begin and when to deſiſt; where to concede and where to enforce; what paſſions to raiſe and what to allay; what arguments to urge and what to ſuppreſs; all theſe points are oftentimes neceſſary to be diſcerned and obſerved by him who would ſucceed in buſineſs of the world; that buſineſs, which he is born in the world to diſcharge with fidelity. Let no man, therefore, in the confidence of mental powers, think prudence a virtue that deſerves not the eſteem of ſuperior underſtanding: nor let any one, miſtaking peeviſh diſguſt or ſpiritual pride, for that elevation of mind which Chriſtianity inſpires, conceive the world in which he lives and the fellow-creatures he is made to help, ſo unworthy his regard, as that their ways and maxims, or their weakneſſes and follies, if ſuch they are to be termed, muſt *never* be conſulted and humoured. DISC. X.

Thoſe, whoſe province it is to inculcate the duties of morality and the truths of religion, have peculiar need of prudence. For though in their public diſcourſes, by the nature

DISC. X. nature of their appointment, they are required to deliver *general* doctrines, yet in their private intercourſe they muſt apply themſelves in a *particular* manner, adapted to the particular perſon they would improve. Here they are concerned with men who, in their capacities, their conceptions, their diſpoſitions, their temptations, their frailties, their vices, differ each from the other. It will certainly be the *wiſh* of every teacher, that all duties and truths ſhould be explained to all men: but from experience he will be perſuaded, that unleſs he unfolds *gradually*, and recommends *progreſſively*, either moral or religious doctrines, as the hearer is able and inclined to receive them; he will labour ineffectually; and perhaps, inſtead of converting a ſinner, he will but create an enemy. Great indeed are the delicacy and circumſpection which are requiſite in the giving of advice and imparting of inſtruction: for it is not to be denied, that if truths are often diſagreeable, they are frequently made ſo by the manner in which they are communicated. Minds the

the moſt candid and moſt patient of admo- DISC. X.
nition, recoil at finding themſelves either inſulted by arrogance, or queſtioned with impertinence, or wounded by harſhneſs. The language of ſuperiority muſt be ſoftened; the competency to examine muſt be apparent; the inquiry muſt proceed with tenderneſs; and reproof muſt be tempered with commendation [102]: theſe precautions are all neceſſary, if we wiſh to gain a favourable admittance of counſel. The Prophets and Apoſtles do indeed rebuke notorious offenders with ſeverity: but let it be remembered they were perſons appointed to an extraordinary miniſtry. Our Divine Inſtructor alſo condemns with authority: but let it be obſerved, He diſcerned the hearts and thoughts of men, and could therefore pronounce infallibly who were ſo abandoned as to be paſt all hope of repentance, that condition in all caſes indiſpenſable

[102] Cavendum ne reprehenſio ſapiat amarulentiam odiumve; ſed multo caritatis et humanitatis admixtu condiatur; interdum et laudis.

ERASMI Eccleſiaſticæ, V. 5. L. 3. p. 1608.

for

DISC. X. for the obtaining of forgiveneſs. Men have now no ſupernatural deſignation: much leſs are they qualified to diſcover all the principles by which the mind of another is influenced in any particular actions; or to foreſee that contrition may not ſucceed to folly. But added to this, it is to be recollected, that in the conduct of our Bleſſed Lord and his Apoſtles the examples of mild inſtruction are much more numerous, than thoſe of ſevere rebuke [103]; and ſuch will it be proper for us to imitate, when we who are frail beings converſe with thoſe whom we reſemble. Deſperate diſeaſes do indeed authoriſe the uſe of deſperate remedies: and crimes of flagitious enormity will juſtify the application of ſtrong cenſure. But in general, mankind are neither ſo profligate as to deſerve, nor ſo calm as to endure [104], nor ſo inſenſible as to require the violent language of intemperate invective. We act wrong and commit ſin, more

[103] See ERASMI Oper. V. 5. p. 100. Ed. Fol. 1704.

[104] Vix reperias quenquam tam placidæ mentis, ut objurgationem patienter ferat. ERASMI Op. V. 5. 1068.

through want of attention than want of knowledge. Attention will then moſt effectually be ſecured, when conſcience can be moved. Aſperity has leſs power to affect our conſcience, than gentle and kind perſuaſion. The thunders of enthuſiaſm may aſtoniſh our ears: but it is the "ſtill, "ſmall voice [105]" of ſoberneſs and moderation that will penetrate moſt deeply into the receſſes of the heart. DISC. X.

Of Chriſtian CHARITY no man has formed ſo complete an idea, or given ſo perfect a deſcription [106], as St. Paul. He confines it not to mere acts of liberality, which relieve the neceſſitous; but extends it to that diſpoſition which in all caſes will ſhew compaſſion and concern for our fellow-creatures. Hence theſe exhortations to mutual forbearance, and to lenient treatment of others who may have fallen into miſconduct: "We that are ſtrong ought "to bear the infirmities of the weak, and "not to pleaſe ourſelves [107]." "Brethren,

[105] 1 Kings, xix. 12. [106] 1 Cor. xiii. 4.
[107] Rom. xiv. 1.

"if

DISC. X. "if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which "are ſpiritual reſtore ſuch an one in the "ſpirit of meekneſs, conſidering leſt thou "alſo be tempted [108]." And in his Epiſtle to the Theſſalonians, when he directs them to admit not into their religious aſſemblies, any perſon who continued obſtinate in refuſing to obſerve his ſalutary admonitions, he enjoins this excluſion for the ſake of the delinquent: not that he ſhould be given up as loſt and abandoned; but "that he may "be aſhamed [109]." And even during the period of his excluſion, they were not to "count him as an enemy, but admoniſh "him as a friend;" and all this, with the compaſſionate and merciful view of bringing him to a ſenſe of his duty [110]. Conſiſtently with theſe his inſtructions to others, he intereſts himſelf even for a fugitive ſlave [111]; and

[108] Gal. vi. 1. [109] 2 Theſſ. iii. 14.

[110] On theſe three texts, ſee "Ratio Veræ Theologiæ" p. 100. V. 5. of Eraſmus, who concludes his Remarks with this memorable ſentence: "Lenitas hæc orbem novavit, quod nulla unquam ſeveritas potuiſſet, p. 100. B.

[111] "Operæ pretium eſt (ſays WITSIUS) hoc exemplo "diſcere, ad quàm minuta ſe demiſerit, modò charitas "exigeret, Apoſtolica ſublimitas." Meletem, p. 197.

See

and with great benignity engages to repay Philemon whatever he might have loſt through the fault of Oneſimus. Forgetful of all the injuries he had ſuffered from his countrymen, in terms that expreſs the ſtrongeſt emotion [112] of heart he bewails the obſtinacy of the Jews in rejecting the Goſpel. With the affectionate appellations [113] of brethren and children, he addreſſes his Chriſtian converts; and deemed it an act of mercy ſhewn unto himſelf, that God had reſtored Epaphroditus from a dangerous ſickneſs to perfect health [114]. Neither words, DISC. X.

See CHRYSOSTOM, Diſc. XLI. p. 588. D. vol. vii. ed. Paris, 1616. and "Horæ Paulinæ," Epiſtle to Philemon.

[112] Rom. ix. 3. The learned reader may conſult WOLFIUS in his "Curæ Philologicæ" on this paſſage, and WITSIUS in his "Miſcellanea Sacra," Exercit 2. for a great variety of explanations given to St. Paul's words.

Excommunication from the Chriſtian church ſeems to have been meant by the Apoſtle.

[113] 1 Cor. iv. 14, 15. and xv. 58. "Mirificis quibuſdam ac plus quam maternis blandimentis auditores allicit." GLASSIUS, L. i. Tr. 4. ſ. 4. See "Horæ Paulinæ" on Second Epiſtle to Corinthians, p. 126. N. 5.

[114] Phil. ii. 27.

DISC. X. nor substance, nor life itself would he have spared, if thereby he could have contributed to the advantage of those whose salvation he was anxious to promote[115].

Nor in justice to their gratitude must it here be omitted, that many of the converts regarded St. Paul with reciprocal affection. When he had finished his last and pathetic discourse to those Ephesians whom he called to Miletus, "they all wept sore, and fell "on Paul's neck, and kissed him; sorrow-"ing most of all for the words which he "spake, that they should see his face no "more[116]." His friends at Cæsarea, foreseeing what would befall him, were agitated with grief to a degree so excessive, that the Apostle found it necessary thus to restrain them; "what mean ye to weep, and to "break my heart[117]?" To the cordiality with which the Galatians received him, he bears this testimony; "if it had been pos-"sible, ye would have plucked out your

[115] Ουδεν ωκνεῖ δαπανᾶν ὑπερ των σωζομενων, ȣ ῥηματα, ȣ χρηματα, ȣ σωμα. CHRYSOSTOM, vol. vii. p. 589. A.

[116] Acts, xx. 37, 38. [117] Ibid. xxi. 13.

"own

" own eyes, and have given them to me[118]." DISC. X.
He expreſſes great anxiety to ſee Timothy again; for he could not forget the tears which that convert ſhed at their laſt ſeparation[119]."

To all of us is not given either ability or opportunity for the exerciſe of charity in the greateſt of its works, the work of reclaiming the wicked from the errors of their ways, and of prevailing on them to receive and obey the Goſpel. But through the grace of God aſſiſting our minds in the taſk of ſelf-government, each of us may have the power of forming his temper to habitual kindneſs, and of ſhewing a charitable inclination by wiſhing and endeavouring to conſult the happineſs of others ſo far as circumſtances will allow.

To the Miniſters of the Goſpel are continually preſented occaſions for fulfilling the duties of charity, in all its branches. Of them, not only in proof of their own conviction, but alſo through tender regard for the faith and morals of thoſe whom they are

[118] Gal. iv. 15. [119] 2 Tim. i. 4.

DISC. X.

bound to teach; of them it is required by their own practice to encourage others in thinking and living rightly. Of them it is expected to inculcate revealed truths, to enforce proper duties, to inſtruct the ignorant, comfort the afflicted, and pay thoſe marks of humane attention, which, though ſmall in themſelves, do nevertheleſs in their conſequences tend to conciliate and gratify all who receive them. If in imitation of St. Paul's charity, the Miniſters of the Goſpel thus act, (and thus throughout this kingdom the Miniſters of ALL DESCRIPTIONS in general do act,) they muſt appear, to every perſon of but common reflection, moſt highly beneficial to the community, and abundantly meriting that eſteem in which they are uſually and deſervedly holden by the ſenſible and ſober part of thoſe with whom they are connected.

As the final conſummation of St. Paul's character, and as the ornament which throws the brighteſt luſtre over his other admirable qualities, let his SANCTITY be remarked: a Sanctity, which conſiſted not of aſcetic ſeverities,

severities, ill calculated for human nature and for our condition in this world; but which was shewn by abstaining from all things either apparently [120] or really evil; and by following in all cases what his judgment apprehended would be most consonant with the will of God, and most deserving the approbation of good men. DISC. X.

Culpable though he had been for the excessive hatred with which, through blind prejudice and mistaken zeal, he had persecuted Christianity, yet in the purity of his manners and holiness of his life, he was without reproach. Confident that no imputation of vice or impiety could be brought against him, with all that firmness which conscious innocence and upright intention usually inspire, he appeals alike to enemies and friends for the rectitude of his actions as a man of virtue, and as a sincere worshipper of God. Hence before the Jews, who would have exulted in an opportunity of charging him with any dissolute, immoral, or unholy practices, he fears not to

[120] 1 Thess. v. 22. 1 Cor. ix. 27. 1 Thess. ii. 10.

DISC. X. make theſe aſſertions: "Men and brethren, "I have lived in all good conſcience before "God until this day[121]." "Herein do I "exerciſe myſelf, to have always a con- "ſcience void of offence toward God and "toward man[122]." "If I be an offender, "or have done any thing worthy of death, "I refuſe not to die[123]." "My manner "of life from my youth, which was at the "firſt among my own nation at Jeruſalem, "know all the Jews[124]." Even malice itſelf could not accuſe him of any crime, that could tend to invalidate the truth and weaken the force of this vindication.

Amidſt all his afflictions and all his dangers he fortifies himſelf with reflecting on the pure principles and unſhaken fidelity which had actuated his mind during his intercourſe with the Gentiles. "Our re- "joicing is this; the teſtimony of our "conſcience; that in ſimplicity and godly "ſincerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but "by the grace of God, we have had our

[121] Acts, xxiii. 1. [122] Acts, xxiv. 16.
[123] Acts, xxv. 11. [124] Acts, xxvi. 4.

"conversation in the world, and more DISC.
"abundantly towards you[125]." "Ye are X.
"witnesses, and God also, how holily, and
"justly, and unblameably we behaved our-
"selves among you that believe[126]."

By this part of his reputation, which stands unimpeached, to individuals the Apostle demonstrates the value of a good name for moral worth and habitual piety: and to all Christians in general he furnishes a strong argument in confirmation of their faith. For they think it utterly irreconcileable with all probability, and absolutely repugnant to credibility, that a man of such acknowledged probity, and zeal for God's honour, should sanction any cause, not founded in truth, with his most serious and solemn attestation; should sustain for it all the horrors of persecution, and finally endure death itself. On the testimony of such a witness, we are warranted by every rule of evidence, and justified by every principle

[125] 2 Cor. i. 12.

[126] 1 Thess. i. 10. See Lord LYTTLETON "on the "Conversion of St. Paul," vol. ii. p. 24. ed. 1776.

DISC. X. of ſound reaſon, in pronouncing the doctrines of Chriſtianity true: and may we imitate St. Paul in receiving and obſerving thoſe doctrines with all the attention and reverence they claim!

Thus then hath been effected the deſign of this Diſcourſe, which was to illuſtrate ſome of the excellences in St. Paul's character, and to intimate the manner in which we might reſemble them. It remains only that we ſhould be careful to follow [127] the example of this Apoſtle, in the virtues we have been contemplating. Like him, let us humble ourſelves before God upon every recollection of our paſt ſins, and never reflect on them but with ſelf-condemnation. Like him, let us be generous in renouncing all immoderate deſires of more wealth than is neceſſary; let us be firm in maintaining our Chriſtian Faith; reſolute in oppoſing our ſenſual appetites; zealous in works of induſtry and public advantage. Like him, let us be

[127] Ὑμας παρακαλῶ, μη θαυμαζειν μονον, αλλα και μιμεισθαι το αρχετυπον τουτο της αρετης. CHRYSOSTOM, v. vii. p. 584. C.

circum-

circumſpect in all our tranſactions; like him, benevolent to the race of mankind. DISC. X.

If the Humility, the Magnanimity, the Zeal, the Prudence, and the Charity of St. Paul, we can happily imitate; to the eſteem of men, who themſelves deſerve praiſe, let us recommend theſe and all our other attainments, by exhibiting the moſt unequivocal proof and the moſt infallible indication that we are influenced in our words and actions by the pureſt principles. For this end, let us avoid all things which are accounted vicious; and not reſting ſatisfied with the mere ſemblance of virtue, let us practiſe all things which in their own nature are intrinſically good: remembering always, that without ſuch holineſs, as is requiſite to form religious and moral excellence, "no man ſhall ſee the Lord[128];" for unto ſuch holineſs it is that "God hath "called us[129]."

[128] Heb. xii. 14. [129] 1 Theſſ. iv. 7.

DISCOURSE XI.

The BLESSINGS of ENGLISHMEN are POSSESSIONS to be defended.

NEHEMIAH, iv. 14.

Remember the Lord, which is great and terrible; and fight for your brethren; your ſons, and your daughters; your wives and your houſes [1].

DISC. XI. SUCH was the exhortation of an admirable governor [2], diſtinguiſhed alike for his piety and public virtue. The efforts of

[1] This Diſcourſe was preached before the Corps of HAMPSHIRE FAWLEY VOLUNTEERS.

[2] See the character of NEHEMIAH delineated by Dr. JORTIN in the Firſt Volume of his Sermons, p. 105. Serm. VI. ed. 1771.

his

his countrymen to rebuild their city were impeded by apprehenſions of danger from combined enemies; but he encourages his people to perſevere in their work, by recalling to their minds the attributes of God, and by ſetting before them the deareſt objects of their warmeſt affections. DISC. X.

At a ſeaſon, which, in maintenance of our religious and civil bleſſings, demands the utmoſt exertion of our ſeveral abilities, and which calls forth the ſpirit and activity, the honour and patriotiſm, of You the generous Corps in this place aſſembled; at ſuch a ſeaſon we cannot have for our ſerious reflection any ſubject more proper, than if we follow the general ſentiments of this ſcriptural admonition; and deeply imprint on our memories the conceptions we form of the Supreme Being, and the comforts we derive from our ſocial condition. The remarks therefore now to be offered will be ſuch as may apply themſelves to the double capacity in which we all ſtand, as rational agents created by God, and as members united in the ſame community.

When

DISC. XI. When we look to the heavens above, the earth beneath, and the maſs of waters which encompaſs the globe, we are ſtruck with aſtoniſhment at the variety and grandeur which theſe ſeveral parts of the univerſe exhibit; and we are filled with admiration at the order and harmony in which they are preſerved. Hence we are convinced, beyond poſſibility of doubt, that they muſt have been created, and are ſtill ſuſtained, by the power and wiſdom of ſome inviſible mind; that mind, which we attribute to God!

When we look upon ourſelves, and conſider the faculties with which we are endued; when we reflect on the manner in which we are formed to derive ſuſtenance and convenience from the different works of creation; from the light and ſhowers of heaven; from the fertility of the earth; from the inhabitants of the waters; from the fowls of the air; from the beaſts of the field; from almoſt every object, animate or inanimate, which can preſent itſelf to the ſight of man; when we reflect on theſe bleſſings,

bleſſings, we are perſuaded that the Creator, who made man capable of enjoying ſo many advantages, to an extent not experienced by any other living creature upon the face of the globe; and who furniſhed in all his works ſuch means of enjoyment to mankind; muſt be a God of unbounded goodneſs and benevolence to the human race. DISC. XI.

That he, who receives a favour, ſhould expreſs his thankfulneſs for it, is the common principle of gratitude. The beſt and wiſeſt men of all ages and countries have acknowledged the truth of this principle, and have been moved by it to ſhew forth their thankfulneſs to God by ſome form of religious worſhip.

We have in our hands the doctrines of an Inſtructor, who with conſummate wiſdom hath taught us the proper form in which religious worſhip is to be exerciſed. God is a Spirit, and therefore is to be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth. The heart and underſtanding are to conceive ſentiments of gratitude, and the tongue is to utter with ſincerity ſuch terms of adoration as are fit

to

DISC. XI. to be expreſſed by rational and devout beings, who unfeignedly would thank and praiſe their greateſt benefactor. After this manner it was the choice of our anceſtors, it is our own choice, to worſhip God.

It is no ſmall recommendation of the religious precepts delivered by this Divine Inſtructor, that with the love of God he intimately connects regard for man. He makes it a duty inſeparable from true piety, that man ſhould exerciſe benevolence towards man. Hence he ordains, that we ſhould honour our natural and civil parents; ſhould check the very firſt emotions of anger, which, if indulged, might lead to acts of violence; ſhould abſtain from groſs vices, which defile wedlock; and reject every thought of irregular appetite; ſhould injure no man in his property; ſhould defame no man; ſhould take away neither his character nor his happineſs, nor his life, by falſehood; ſhould conceive no ſecret diſcontent, nor lurking envy, at another's proſperity; ſhould think and do nothing to another, which we ourſelves ſhould diſlike, if others did

did the ſame to us. Theſe are rules ſo conſiſtent with all the concluſions of right reaſon, and ſo formed to preſerve the order, the perſons, the virtue, the poſſeſſions, the good name, and the friendly intercourſe of mankind, that the ſyſtem of Chriſtianity which inculcates theſe rules, our anceſtors choſe to embrace; and we, of our own choice, continue to hold faſt a ſyſtem of moral duties ſo excellent, becauſe ſo uſeful and beneficial to human nature. DISC. XI.

As we live in ſociety, we all of us ſtand in ſome relative ſituation. We are either parents or maſters, or friends, on the one hand; or we are children, or ſervants, or connected by ties of conſanguinity and affection on the other. From the diſcharge of thoſe duties, which on each are incumbent, according to the particular ſituation in which he is placed, ariſes a bond of union which nothing ſeparates but the hour of death. That continual interchange of benign looks, of complacent words, of ſtudious attention, of kind offices, of unremitting ſolicitude, which ſubſiſts between the ſeveral members

DISC. XI. members of a family, endears each to the other with love indiſſoluble: and, in proportion as the ſame means of acquiring eſteem are extended beyond our families, degrees of ſincere regard and inviolable attachment are the uſual returns. Theſe are called the tender charities of life; charities of a nature ſo amiable in themſelves, and of force ſo powerful, in coming home to the boſom of every perſon well-diſpoſed, that from them flow the ſweeteſt comforts of human life.

The property which we poſſeſs hath either been delivered down to us from our forefathers, who acquired it by meritorious ſervices and active exertions, or it hath been gained by ourſelves, as a compenſation of our induſtry, and a reward for the uſeful application of our talents. Whether our property be much or little, and whether it comes to us by inheritance, or by our own labour, that which every perſon has lawfully gotten, is equally his own, and ought to be deemed equally ſacred. And happily for perſons of every deſcription, and of every

every order in our own Country, this is the undiſputed maxim of our law. He that hath his ſmaller dwelling, his more ſcanty ſupply of furniture, his more ſpare proviſions, his more contracted ſpot of land; that man is equally to be protected in his allotment as the man who is more wealthy. To this principle every juſt man readily agrees; and for this reaſon, viz. becauſe the dwelling, the furniture, the proviſions, the land of the poorer man, are his own; and, being his own, cannot without injuſtice be taken from him. The reaſoning is right, as the principle is right; and all honeſt minds acknowledge it to be ſo, and are anxious to have it obſerved in univerſal practice. DISC. XI.

But it is here neceſſary to remark, that there are perſons who are ſo miſtaken as to confine this principle and reaſoning to their own Order only; whereas in common ſenſe, and common honeſty, they are bound, indiſpenſably bound, to extend the ſame principle and reaſoning to men of all Orders, all ranks, and all deſcriptions. If the poorer

DISC. XI. perſon is to be protected in his property, becauſe it is his own, the richer perſon is alſo to be protected for the ſame reaſon. If it is unlawful and unjuſt for the richer man to injure the property of the poorer, it muſt be equally unlawful and unjuſt for the poorer man to injure the property of the more rich. For, to both alike, his property is his own; and, being his own, to both alike it ſhould be ſecured as ſacred. This is but common honeſty.

It might, moreover, not be improper to remind the ſame perſons, that not only conſiderations of common honeſty, but many reaſons alſo of prudence and ſelf-intereſt, ſhould induce the poorer to defend the rich. The rich find employment for the poor, in works of art, in purſuits of commerce, in labours of induſtry. The conſequence of this employment is, that the poorer man gains money with which to purchaſe neceſſaries, and ſees neceſſaries ready for him to purchaſe; whereas, if the rich were injured in their property, there would, firſt, be an end of employment for the poor; then would follow

follow univerſal beggary; and the effect of general idleneſs, and general diſtreſs, muſt be a want of ſupply in articles neceſſary for food and raiment. DISC. XI.

Let the ſame perſons alſo not forget, that the rich are the patrons who liberally contribute to the encouragement of all inſtitutions uſeful to the public, and who charitably ſupport the numberleſs buildings where proviſion is prepared for the needy, and relief for the ſick. But if the rich were injured in their property, all the ſupplies that are given to thoſe in want; all the ſupplies that maintain houſes in which the young and the aged find ſuſtenance; all the ſupplies that procure the comforts and remedies, the ſkill and attention beſtowed on the infirm in hoſpitals; all theſe advantages, which the poorer Order now derive from the more wealthy, would at once periſh. It is, then, not only for the ſake of doing right, but it is moſt eſſentially and moſt deeply for their own intereſt, that the poorer ſort ſhould be anxious to defend the rich, as the rich are zealous to protect them.

DISC. XI.

We have among us different ranks in ſociety. No ſociety of large extent can peaceably exiſt without due ſubordination. Subordination requires, as the term implies, diſtinctions of place and of authority. Thoſe diſtinctions muſt be multiplied in proportion to the number of members who compoſe a ſociety, or the ſubordination will not be duly preſerved. The perſons appointed to ſuch diſtinctions, are either men who by right of inheritance claim privileges derived from their anceſtors; or men poſſeſſed of that property which, in the nature of things, muſt and will have weight in ſociety; or men, who for ſervices beſtowed on the public, either by martial enterprize, or legal labours, or ingenious talents, or political ſuperintendence, are entitled to expect an honourable return from the people to whom they have devoted their lives and abilities. To the perſons who fill appointments of diſtinction, we affix certain titles, which, by long uſage, are known to imply comparative ſuperiority in the gradations of ſociety. What thoſe titles ſhould be, is matter

matter only of local cuſtom and national expediency. If they do but convey thoſe ideas of diſtinction which, according to our commonly received notions, they are intended and are allowed to convey, it can be of no conſequence what the terms and appellations in themſelves are; and all that has been ſaid againſt ſuch terms and appellations, is but frivolous diſputing about words. The ſubſtance is what every prudent man conſiders. The ſubſtance implied by titles is diſtinction, and the deſign of diſtinction is to promote order, without which, ſociety cannot be preſerved. DISC. XI.

We have in this Country laws the moſt equitable and the moſt humane. We may challenge the world to ſhew us a people, among whom juſtice to high and low, to rich and poor, is without diſtinction more impartially adminiſtered; where property, freedom, and life, are more firmly inſured to every individual; or where puniſhments for violation of law are more mildly adjudged, and compaſſionately executed.

DISC. XI. We have, for the preſervation of all other bleſſings, and for the general ſupport of public good, a glorious Conſtitution; a Conſtitution ſo formed as that popular ardour, deliberate judgment, and ſpeedy execution, are at once combined in it. If from our Conſtitution were taken away either the active principles of the Commons, or the more ſedate conſideration of the Lords, or the prompt diſpatch of the Crown; if there were taken away the vigour of one body, the moderate check reſulting from the other, and the preſcribed power of ſtopping the intemperate endeavours either of faction or of ambition, a power reſiding, though under due limitation, in a third part; if either of theſe component branches were taken away, our Conſtitution would loſe that degree of perfection, which not only in ſpeculation might be conceived, but which in practice and experience (the only true teſt of excellence) is actually found to exiſt in it.

Thus, then, for your conſideration, have been briefly enumerated the circumſtances which

which contribute to the happineſs of us all, as men and as Engliſhmen! Let me now place them in a point of view which may particularly engage your attention. DISC. XI.

Be it then remembered, that the religion after which we worſhip God is our poſſeſſion[3]. The goſpel, which teaches us ſuch excellent precepts, is our poſſeſſion. Our families, of whatever members they may conſiſt, are our poſſeſſions. The comforts derived from them are our poſſeſſions. Our food, our raiment, our houſes, our lands, our property of all kinds, are our poſſeſſions. The arrangement of ranks, which prevails among us, is our poſſeſſion. Our laws, our Conſtitution, and the Country we inhabit, are our poſſeſſions. All theſe things are either by choice, or connection, or inheritance, or induſtry, or appointment,

[3] Religion, as a matter of poſſeſſion, may be conſidered in the nature of a civil right; and in this point of view, like all other civil rights, in the poſſeſſion of which we are not to be diſturbed, may be among the objects certainly of a *defenſive*, though not of an *offenſive*, war.

See Bp. HOOPER's Seventh Sermon, p. 672. fol. edit.

DISC. XI. or birth, our poſſeſſions, our juſt and lawful poſſeſſions.

What power upon earth, then, can claim to itſelf the right to diſpoſſeſs us of theſe precious, theſe ineſtimable bleſſings? None. Our own they are; and, by the favour of God on all who take arms in defence of every thing that can make life deſirable, our own they will continue to be!

Yet, in theſe, and all our poſſeſſions, we are more than threatened by enemies who have already inſulted our coaſts: enemies, who, to plunder property, confound all ranks, aboliſh our laws, trample on our religion, and ſubvert our Conſtitution; enemies, who, firſt to deſolate, and then ſubjugate our Nation as a province dependent on their own government, would bring into the boſom of this Country all the horrors of war. The ruinous degradation of Britain is the object they moſt earneſtly deſire to accompliſh. If then they perſiſt in their endeavours to effect our overthrow, we can have no other choice, than either with cowardly and wicked ſubmiſſion to ſurrender

ſurrender our poſſeſſions, or to be in readi- DISC. XI.
neſs for the protection of our religious and civil bleſſings. That they will *not* perſiſt in their enormous project of havoc and conqueſt, we cannot foreſee: in prudence, therefore, the latter alternative is the better part. And of alacrity in making preparations neceſſary at this important criſis, you have given an example which merits the applauſe and gratitude of your Country.

Nor in this inſtance only have you ſhewn yourſelves a pattern worthy of imitation. By this your attendance on divine ſervice at an early period of your military operations, with ſound judgment and manly piety, (I repeat the words,) with ſound judgment and manly piety, you teach us all to direct our attention, and raiſe our minds unto God, as the Almighty Being who alone can determine the event of battle. To him then may we all lift up our hearts, and encourage a diſpoſition both in ourſelves and others, firſt to obey his precepts, and then to rely on his ſupport.

DISC. XI. We of this nation have ſingular cauſe for reliance on the goodneſs and aid of Divine Providence. Let us "conſider what great "things God has done for us[4];" what deliverances he hath wrought for this Country. In former ages, a Spaniſh armament was ſent againſt our forefathers, prepared with every inſtrument of torture which the ingenious cruelty of bitter perſecution could in thoſe days invent: Divine Providence diſperſed this armament, and brought the counſels of its authors to nought. It is within the remembrance[5] of many here preſent, that the united fleets of France and Spain approached our coaſts[6]: peſtilential ſickneſs diſabled and deſtroyed their force. But why recur we to years elapſed? Only ſome few weeks are yet gone, ſince, at God's word, the wind and ſtorm, fulfilling his commands, diſpelled a hoſt of enemies from a neighbouring kingdom[7]; a kingdom

[4] 1 Sam. xii. 24.
[5] Towards the end of the laſt war.
[6] In the month of Auguſt 1779.
[7] IRELAND.

with

with the ſafety of which are inſeparably connected our own proſperity, our own glory, our own independence! Still nearer to us is another event, in its ſeaſon providential, in its conſequences momentous; the ſignal victory which, by the bleſſing of God, our gallant navy[8] gained over an enemy[9] perfidious and diſhonourable; an enemy that was not ſatisfied with forfeiting alliance, but which, without any plea of adequate provocation, is actively aſſiſting an oppreſſive nation[10], that graſps at dominion over the whole of Europe. DISC. XI.

Thanks be to God! who thus defeated the hoſtile deſigns of our menacing adverſaries. May his powerful aid continue to ſupport all thoſe who ſtand forth to be our protectors! In this prayer let every heart, and every tongue, devoutly accord!

And now, having renewed our ſenſe of veneration towards that gracious Being who is the firſt author and original giver of the manifold bleſſings we enjoy; and having

[8] Under the command of Sir JOHN JERVIS.
[9] The Spaniards. [10] The French.

impreſſed

DISC. XI. impreſſed on our minds the ineſtimable value of thoſe objects, which natural affection, ties of friendſhip, rational prudence, love of freedom, Britiſh character, excite us to guard; let us go hence; YOU, to fulfil the ſcriptural exhortation, perhaps literally; and we, to obſerve it, each according to his reſpective ability, in its wider meaning. You, with your arms, will be zealous to encounter the greater peril, and thus heighten the eſteem with which you are now regarded: we, with any ſervices for which we are qualified, will be no leſs zealous to co-operate with your endeavours, and to expreſs our ſentiments of obligation to you. You by military, and we by civil duties, will all conduce with heart and hand to preſerve our religion, our families, our property, our order, our laws, our Conſtitution, our Country; to preſerve theſe bleſſings, which are by right our indefeaſible poſſeſſions: and in the ſpirit and language of him, who bade the Jews "remember the Lord, and fight "for their brethren, their ſons, their daugh- "ters, their wives, and their houſes," let each

each of us conceive this ſupplication: "Think DISC. XI.
" upon me, my God, for good, according
" to all that I have done for this people[11]:"
nor for this people only, but for others alſo, who, though locally diſtant, are yet, by attachment and affection, ſo united with us, that as alike we acknowledge the ſame ſovereign, ſo alike we have but one and the ſame cauſe, in ſtruggling to keep ourſelves unconquered by any foreign enemies, and independent of any foreign dominion. That our mutual efforts, in a conteſt ſo great and intereſting, may, through Divine protection, avert the danger now impending, God of his mercy grant!

[11] Nehem. v. 19.

DISCOURSE XII.

On PROPITIATION, Jewiſh and Chriſtian.

ECCLESIASTICUS, v. 5.

Concerning Propitiation, be not without fear to add ſin unto ſin.

DISC. XII. BY the Divine ordinance contained in the Moſaic law, the Jews were commanded to make atonement for their ſins by the offering of ſacrifices [t]. In whatever point of view we conſider this inſtitution; whether as the revival of a cuſtom which had in earlier ages prevailed among the worſhippers of the true God; or as an appointment altogether new, and then firſt eſtabliſhed when

[t] See Levit. c. iv. and c. xvi.

the

the Jews were delivered from Egyptian bondage; in either caſe there will ariſe this queſtion: As the act of ſacrificing has no intrinſic efficacy to renew the moral innocence of a moral tranſgreſſor, how could that act avail to the recovery of God's favour? The act taken ſimply, ſeparately, and without any reference to other conſiderations, could not avail in the ſmalleſt degree to ſuch an effect. Something more then is requiſite than the act itſelf; and that is, the principle on which the act is performed. Annex to the act ſome moral principle, and then as God may forgive ſin on any terms, which to himſelf ſeem proper, ſo He may accept ſacrifice as conducive to pardon, for the ſake of the principle with which that ſacrifice is offered. And thus, though the bare act be of itſelf inefficacious, yet, when proceeding from ſome moral principle, it may be inſtrumental to the regaining of Divine favour. DISC. XII.

Let us enquire then, what principles the laws of God demanded of every man living under the Jewiſh diſpenſation. On one occaſion

DISC. XII. occaſion it is ſaid, " If ye will *obey* my " voice indeed, and *keep* my covenant; " then ye ſhall be a peculiar treaſure unto " me, above all people[2]." On another, with great energy it is aſked of the Jews, " And now, Iſrael, what doth the Lord " thy God require of thee, but to *fear* the " Lord thy God, to *walk in all his ways*, " and to *love* him, and to *ſerve* the Lord " thy God with *all thy heart* and with *all* " *thy ſoul*[3]?" Whence it appears, that obedience, fear, and love were inculcated as the requiſites for Divine favour; moral principles reſulting from mental diſpoſitions: and if any Jew would offer to God an acceptable ſacrifice, he muſt do it under impreſſions of obedience to God's commands, and with affections of fear and love towards God; affections not merely verbal and pretended, but actually felt and unfeignedly experienced. Now although theſe impreſſions and affections of the mind could not poſſibly make innocent him that had been morally guilty, yet to a God of mercy, to a

[2] Exod. xix. 5. [3] Deut. x. 12.

Father

Father of compaſſion, they are motives for receiving a tranſgreſſor into favour, upon his compliance with a poſitive rite ordained as a teſt of his obedience. So that, although the rite in itſelf had been inſignificant, yet when performed becauſe God ordained it ſhould be performed, and when accompanied with thoſe inward diſpoſitions which a moral Governor requires from a moral agent, in conſideration of the principles which occaſioned the act of offering, the act itſelf would become available to pardon. DISC. XII.

And this reaſoning is confirmed by other parts of Scripture, which ſhew that ſacrifice, *without right moral and religious principles*, can have *no effect* towards the obtaining of pardon. "To what purpoſe is the multi-
"tude of your ſacrifices unto me? ſaith
"the Lord—I will hide mine eyes from
"you; yea when ye make many prayers,
"I will not hear: your hands are full of
"blood. Waſh ye, make ye clean, put
"away the evil of your doings from before
"mine eyes; ceaſe to do evil, learn to do
"well, ſeek judgment, relieve the op-

DISC. XII. "preſſed, judge the fatherleſs, plead for "the widow[4]." The purport of this reproof was to convince the Jewiſh rulers, that although the offering of ſacrifice was by Divine appointment, and therefore not to be neglected by them, yet that God, who is ſpiritual, could not deem acceptable oblations merely carnal and external; but required of them the ſpiritual and rational ſervice of their hearts and lives, manifeſted by obſervance of his moral laws. Such ſpiritual and rational ſervice they paid Him not; their ritual ceremonies and ſacrifice of animals were therefore holden in abomination, as being the offerings of mere hypocriſy.

Thus then it appears, that although it pleaſed God to ordain ſacrifice as the expiation of ſin, yet He did not ſo ordain it as that in *all* caſes it ſhould be thus available. Much was to be done by the tranſgreſſor: he was to humble himſelf before God with a ſenſe of his iniquity and under the influ-

[4] Iſaiah, i. 11, 15, 16, 17.—See alſo Pſalm l. 9—14. 1 Sam. xv. 22. Amos, v. 21—24.

ence

ence of moral and religious principles; without which ſenſe and influence, the mere act of ſacrificing was but criminal mockery in the ſight of God moſt holy! DISC. XII.

And now ariſes a ſecond queſtion: With what view could the offering of ſacrifice be appointed as the ritual condition of obtaining pardon?

The Moſaic law was "the ſhadow of "good things to come[5];" and all its inſtitutions were figurative repreſentations, or "patterns[6]" of a better covenant that was to ſucceed[7] the Jewiſh diſpenſation. That covenant can be no other than the Chriſtian; and under the Chriſtian covenant there is no other ſacrifice than that of Chriſt. "By his own blood He entered in once "into the Holy Place, having obtained "eternal redemption for us.—Once in the "end of the world hath He appeared to put "away ſin by the ſacrifice of himſelf.— "Chriſt was once offered to bear the ſins of

[5] Heb. x. 1. [6] Heb. viii. 5—8.

[7] See "Sermon VIII. p. 336, &c. of the Bampton "Lectures," preached by Dr. White, ed. 1ſt.

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" many."—" We are ſanctified through " the offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt " once for all, (who,) after He had offered " one ſacrifice for ſins, for ever ſat down " at the right hand of God[8]." If then the other parts of the Jewiſh œconomy were but indications of the Chriſtian, ſacrifice under the Law muſt have prefigured ſacrifice under the Goſpel; and ſo the ſacrifice which was offered for expiation of ſin under the law of Moſes, had a foreſight[9] to the offering of Chriſt, who is our atoning ſacrifice, and who in the language of Revelation is ſtyled emphatically " The Lamb " ſlain from the foundation of the world[10]."

[8] Heb. ix. 12. 26—28. and x. 10—12.

[9] The prohibition againſt eating blood, given to Noah in Gen. ix. 4. had a view to the Atonement, which was to be made by the blood of Chriſt; and this prohibition is renewed in the Levitical law, on the ſame principle; " I " have given it you (i. e. the blood) upon the altar, to " make an atonement for your ſouls: for it is the blood " that maketh an atonement for the ſoul." Lev. xvii. 11. See " Sacred and Profane Hiſtory of the World con- " nected," by Dr. Shuckford, vol. i. b. 2. p. 93. ed. 1743.

[10] Rev. xiii. 8. See alſo St. Pet. 1 Ep. i. 19, 20.

Thus

Thus the death of Chriſt, though laſt in time, was firſt in effect; though exhibited to the world in the latter age, yet in the contemplation of God it had to all purpoſes of ſatisfying the immutable laws of Eternal Juſtice been powerful towards the placing of mankind in a capacity to recover Divine favour, even from the beginning of the world. DISC. XII.

There is then between the Jewiſh and Chriſtian diſpenſation the cloſeſt affinity; and whatſoever moral and religious principles were requiſite under the one, muſt be requiſite under the other; indeed much more requiſite; becauſe Chriſtianity, being the completion of the Jewiſh œconomy, ſhould therefore be altogether perfect. And in fact we find that our Saviour demands of his diſciples a higher degree of virtue and piety than was preſcribed to the Jews. As He came to aboliſh the burdenſome parts of ritual ſervice, He enjoined on Chriſtians more exact attention to ſpiritual duties. The moral precepts therefore of the Law he explained to ſuch an extent of perfection,

DISC. XII. as the Jews had not conceived them capable of admitting: for a variety of ceremonious ordinances he ſubſtituted only two very ſimple, though very ſignificant rites: and the general tendency of his inſtructions is, that our hearts, thoughts, deſires, and actions ſhould all be devoted to the ſervice of God, the benefit of mankind, and the work of our own ſalvation. Under ſuch a diſpenſation, the very eſſence of which is ſpiritual improvement, no act of outward worſhip, no kind of external oblation, can from a Chriſtian be acceptable to God, unleſs it be accompanied with thoſe inward qualities which the Goſpel requires; namely, a diſpoſition to act with obedience, fear, and love towards God, and with integrity towards man, which are duties of eternal obligation, and which the Moſaic Law enforces; with the additional principles of faith in Chriſt as the Son of God, and a ſenſe of obligation to admit and obſerve his doctrines; principles which himſelf hath demanded of all his diſciples, and which are therefore indiſpenſably requiſite in every

every one that ſeriouſly hopes for redemption. DISC. XII.

It is indeed ſaid by our Lord himſelf, that he came "to give his life a ranſom for "many[11];" that "his blood is ſhed for "many, for the remiſſion of ſins[12];" that "God ſent not his Son into the world, to "condemn the world; but that the world "through him might be ſaved[13]." But theſe, like many other expreſſions in Scripture, which when detached from the whole body appear unqualified poſitions, muſt be compared with other paſſages, and reſtricted to ſuch an acceptation as the uniform language of the Goſpel will fairly authoriſe. In other parts then we meet with theſe declarations; "Not every one that ſaith unto "me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the "will of my Father which is in Heaven[14]." "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of "God is at hand; repent ye, and believe "the Goſpel[15]." Our Lord applies the

[11] St. Matt. xx. 28.
[12] St. Matt. xxvi. 28.
[13] St. John, iii. 17.
[14] St. Matt. vii. 21.
[15] St. Mark, i. 15.

DISC. XII. words of Iſaiah as a reproof to miſinterpreters of the Moſaic Law; "This people "draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, "and honoureth me with their lips; but "their heart is far from me[16]." And he upbraideth the Phariſees for the oſtentatious punctuality with which they obſerved minute ceremonies, while at the ſame time they "omitted the weightier matters of the "law, judgment, mercy, and faith[17]," i. e. juſt dealing, charitable behaviour, and ſuch faith as could work in their ſouls ſincere deſires of obedience to the will of God. Now if theſe paſſages are viewed together; if on the one hand we conſider the declarations of forgiveneſs, and on the other the injunctions of moral and religious principles, and regard them as alike proceeding from the ſame authority, it will be impoſſible for us to miſconceive the purport of Chriſt's Goſpel: for the doctrine it eſtabliſhes is briefly this; that Chriſt died in order to obtain remiſſion of ſins to all thoſe who are ſincerely penitent, and who wiſh

[16] Iſaiah, xxix. 13. [17] St. Matt. xxiii. 23.

to

to be reformed; but that no ſuch remiſſion will be extended to thoſe who do not repent, and have no wiſh to be reformed. DISC. XII.

Let us apply theſe remarks to that ſolemn inſtitution, which we call the Chriſtian ſacrifice, or ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper. "The cup of bleſſing, which we bleſs, (ſays "St. Paul,) is it not the communion of the "blood of Chriſt? The bread, which we "break, is it not the communion of the "body of Chriſt[ss]?" In which expreſſions the Apoſtle means to ſay, that when the bread and wine are received by us as repreſentations of Chriſt's body and blood, we partake of the benefits which Chriſt imparted to mankind by the ſacrifice of his real body. But all indiſcriminately, whether good or bad, virtuous or vicious, religious or irreligious, do not partake of thoſe benefits by receiving bread and wine in remembrance of Chriſt's death: for, if by the ſacrifice of his real body the benefits of pardon were extended only to thoſe who would conſcientiouſly endeavour to forſake

[ss] 1 Cor. x. 16.

ſin,

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ſin, then by the act which repreſents that ſacrifice, the ſame benefits can be extended only to thoſe who are influenced by the ſame principle. If Chriſt himſelf gave no promiſe, that Divine favour ſhould be reſtored to thoſe who obſtinately perſiſted in ſin, and would not return to God with repentance and faith; the rite, which is obſerved in remembrance of him, cannot convey to impenitent ſinners any hope of pardon. It is evident that Chriſt diſclaims as his ſervants, and [19]excepts from the covenant of mercy the hardened and unrepenting, whatever might be their profeſſion: *it* is clear therefore that this inſtitution ordained by him muſt be conceived as excluding, from all expectations of Divine favour, thoſe perſons who in their minds ſtill intend to purſue their former ſins, though they come to the Sacrament with the language of contrition. Thus, although it is ſaid in general terms that Chriſt is "the propitiation for our ſins[20]," and "alſo "for the ſins of the whole world," yet the

[19] St. Matt. vii. 23. [20] 1 St. John, ii. 2.

words

words are not to be taken as a poſition ap- DISC. XII.
plicable in all caſes, and extending to all perſons alike; but, according to the uniform ſenſe of Scripture, they are to be underſtood as a declaration that Chriſt is the propitiation for the ſins of thoſe only, "who with hearty repentance and true "faith turn unto God[21]," and that to ſuch, and ſuch alone[22], the conſequences of Chriſt's death will be, that the ſins they have forſaken will not be remembered to their condemnation, and that their future earneſt endeavours to live virtuouſly and piouſly will, for Chriſt's ſake, be accepted and rewarded by God. But on thoſe, who will not forſake their ſins, and will not upon good principles ſtrive to amend their lives; upon ſuch, the guilt of

[21] Communion Service.

[22] See Bp. SHERLOCK's Diſc. X. p. 227. vol. ii. ed. 1764. "Though God has promiſed pardon to penitent "ſinners, yet his promiſe muſt be expounded ſo as to be "conſiſtent with his deſign in ſending Chriſt into the "world; and then it can never be extended to thoſe who "uſe the Goſpel as a protection to wickedneſs, and ſin be-"cauſe God has promiſed to be merciful."

ſinful

DISC. XII. ſinful conduct will remain with all its malignity, and the conſequences of moral tranſgreſſion will overtake them in a future ſtate, to avenge the daring contempt with which they have purpoſely violated, in this world, the righteous laws of God their Moral Governor.

If from what has been ſtated it appears evident, that where moral and religious principles are wanting in the perſon, who makes oblation of any kind, his oblation is nugatory; it will eaſily be diſcerned *that* the Son of Sirach ſpake with great wiſdom and a right ſenſe of the end for which *all* ſacred ordinances are appointed, when he delivered this judicious and weighty precept; "Concerning propitiation, be not "without fear, to add ſin unto ſin: and "ſay not, his mercy is great, he will be "pacified for the multitude of my ſins. "For mercy and wrath come from him, "and his indignation reſteth upon ſinners[23];" i. e. in other words, "Do not

[23] Eccleſiaſticus, v. 5, 6.

"ſo

" ſo miſconceive the deſign for which ſa- DISC.
" crifices of propitiation were inſtituted, as XII.
" to imagine the offering of them will
" give you permiſſion to ſin: nor ſo miſ-
" apply the mercy of God, as to make it an
" encouragement for accumulated wicked-
" neſs. For, although he is indeed a God
" of mercy to thoſe who love him and en-
" deavour to keep his commandments, yet
" He is alſo a God who will execute wrath
" on thoſe who of determined purpoſe com-
" mit iniquity. Remember this, and fear
" to aggravate the guilt of one ſin, by th.
" addition of others in continued ſucceſ-
" ſion."

This exhortation may lead us to point out the fatal deluſion by which thoſe deceive themſelves, who endeavour to ſatisfy their conſcience with an impoſing perſuaſion, that ſince God is merciful, and has appointed a holy rite expreſſive of a propitiation made for ſinners, therefore they may perſiſt in their vicious courſes till their appetites are ſatiated, confident that pardon will at length be granted, if they do but take the Sacra-

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ment when the meaſure of their iniquity is full as they could wiſh.

God is indeed merciful, and the very ſinner who abuſes his mercy doth nevertheleſs experience the effects of it, in that by God's Providence his life is prolonged, that he may have time for repentance. The life we are now paſſing is a ſtate of trial, the only ſtate of trial we are taught to expect. The duties required of us in this probation are ſo clearly made known to us, that in general caſes of morality and religion it is impoſſible for any one, of common underſtanding, to miſtake the line of conduct he ought to purſue. Every deviation from the proper line is an act of diſobedience to God's law, and as ſuch incurs the penalty due to tranſgreſſion: when therefore we have ſo ſwerved from the path of rectitude, we muſt return to it again, if we would be finally happy. And return we muſt without delay: for the time given us, in which to ſhew by our actions whether we are really deſirous of making amends for paſt miſconduct, is altogether uncertain.

Many

DISC. XII.

Many are taken off in the midſt of their tranſgreſſions: as there remains to them no other ſtate of trial, they are precluded from all poſſibility of returning to their duty; they die in their ſins, and muſt inevitably endure the fatal conſequences of wickedneſs. It is therefore an act of great mercy in God, when He prolongs to ſinful man exiſtence in this world; ſince He thereby affords opportunity for him to [24] recover from his faults, and to teſtify his repentance for paſt miſconduct, by more exact conformity of his ſentiments and actions to the Divine commands through the remaining period of his abode on earth. To ſuch repentance is promiſed forgiveneſs of the miſdeeds before committed in contradiction to our knowledge of duty: and thus God diſplays his mercy in two inſtances, by allowing ſinners time [25] for recollection and amendment, and

[24] Οἷς δὲ ὑπ' ἀγνοιας τῆ καλῆ, μαλλον ἡ προαιρεσει τὸ αισχρὸν το ἁμαρτητικον εικος ἐγγεγονεναι, διδωσι μεταβαλεσθαι χρονον.

Σκοπεῖ δὲ ὁσαι μεταβολαι γεγονασιν εις ηθος ανδρων και βιων.

PLUT. Περι των ὑπο τῆ Θειῆ βραδεως τιμωρημενων.

[25] See Bp. SHERLOCK's Diſc. VIII. p. 214. vol. iii. edit. 1764.

by

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by receiving them into ſuch a degree of favour as to prevent their miſery, upon conditions that beſpeak in Him a compaſſionate and paternal love for his creature, Man!

But what could we think if one who hath been ſpared ſhould argue with himſelf after this manner? "It is true I am practiſing "many vices and committing many iniqui- "ties; but God is merciful; he will forgive "me at the laſt on eaſy terms; I will truſt "to his mercy; and ſo proceed till I am ſa- "tisfied in all my deſires [26]." Sentiments of this kind would ſurely betray the moſt corrupt depravity, and the baſeſt ingratitude. Thus to pervert the mercy of God to the vileſt of purpoſes, would be the moſt deteſtable abuſe of Divine benignity that could be conceived, criminal and odious in the ſight of reaſonable men, as before the Holy God! For put the caſe as happening among ourſelves. A friend is diſpoſed to pardon ſome faults, by which occaſionally we may have offended

[26] See Bp. SHERLOCK's Diſc. VI. vol. ii. p. 126. ed. 1764. "To ſin, in hopes of mercy, is abuſing the mercy "of God, and making the goodneſs of our Heavenly Fa- "ther a reaſon for diſobeying him."

him

him through inconſideration; nay he even forgives a premeditated act, by which we have injured him. Should the perſon thus forgiven thence preſume on the placability of his friend, and on that ground encourage himſelf to proceed in violating the regard which, from the very circumſtance of his placability, is doubly due to him? Such a return would be ſo ungenerous, that it would be deemed the groſſeſt inſult on the benevolence of friendſhip. Yet thus it happens with men who intentionally perſiſt in ſin, having in view at the ſame time confeſſion and the ſacrament, after their courſe is finiſhed; and relying on God's mercy that *then* they ſhall be pardoned, if they do but externally obſerve the ſacred ordinances. It might have been pronounced as almoſt impoſſible that ſo much abſurdity and depravity ſhould operate on the mind of a rational being, had not the Son of Sirach ſhewn by his exhortation that there were men of that folly and turpitude in his days; if St. Paul likewiſe had not found occaſion to reprobate, in the ſtrongeſt terms, the

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language of ſome, who perverted his words to a meaning directly contrary to the inference he intended ſhould be drawn from them [27]; and if we alſo did not hear it ſaid among Chriſtians they ſhould go to the ſacrament, and *that* would abſolve them from all their ſins. Shocking blaſphemy! impious profanation of a holy rite! But let ſuch perſons be aſſured, that the barely outward act of taking the ſacrament, accompanied with no inward ſenſe of contrition for paſt ſins, and no unfeigned reſolution of future amendment, can have no efficacy towards the attainment of forgiveneſs. Under the Goſpel, as under the Law, this truth is unalterably the ſame; "The ſacrifice of "the wicked is an abomination to the "Lord; but the prayer of the upright is "his delight: the way of the wicked is "an abomination to the Lord, but he "loveth him that followeth after righteouſ-"neſs [28]."

[27] Rom. iii. 7, 8. and vi. 1—4. See the beginning of Bp. SHERLOCK's 18th Diſc. vol. ii. p. 403, 4, 5.

[28] Prov. xv. 8, 9.

But

But let us ſuppoſe a better caſe; and conceive a perſon living at preſent in a courſe of wickedneſs, intending however to reform at a certain period, and imagining he ſhall then make atonement for his immoralities. Apart from the conſideration that it is extremely difficult at once to lay aſide the vicious habits to which we have been accuſtomed, the determination itſelf of ſinning for ſome time muſt be highly criminal, becauſe it is acting upon a ſettled principle of contumacy adopted with cool reflection. So long as the influence of that principle ſhould remain, the partaking of the ſacrament could avail not to pardon; and ſhould the perſon, who had ſinned thus deliberately for a ſeaſon, begin at laſt to execute his deſign of reformation, (a circumſtance not very probable,) ſtill however he may be aſſured that the effect of any propitiation can be only in proportion to the ſincerity with which he condemns in his heart his paſt enormities, and with which he earneſtly intends to act on principles of conſcientious regard to the commands of God during the remainder of his life. DISC. XII.

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Thus then, as mental renovation is the great object of the Law and the Goſpel, and as nothing[29] ſhort of a reformed diſpoſition and altered conduct is acceptable to God, the Goſpel Religion contains the ſtrongeſt motives for deſiſting from immorality and impiety, and for cultivating every affection that is virtuous and holy.

And this will appear more evidently, if it be conſidered, that in proportion to our improvements in goodneſs will be the degrees[30] of reward in a future ſtate. Two parables of our Saviour directly tend to prove this point. Five cities were aſſigned

[29] All the arts and contrivances of men to atone for their ſins without forſaking them, are affronts to God, contradictions to reaſon, and ſuch as would effectually overthrow the credit of any revelation which ſhould profeſs them. Bp. SHERLOCK's Diſc. XVIII. vol. ii. p. 424.

[30] I muſt further obſerve a plain implication in our Lord's language, that the degree of future rewards and puniſhments will be adapted to our reſpective merits or demerits; and add to what has been already ſuggeſted on this point, that for ſome it is prepared to ſit on our Lord's right and left hand in his glorious kingdom; and that ſome will receive more abundant condemnation.

Archbiſhop NEWCOME's Obſervations on our Lord's Conduct, ſect. 5. p. 16. ed. 1795.

to

to the ſervant who had gained five pounds; and ten to him that produced an increaſe of ten pounds[31]. The prodigal, upon his repentance, was indeed received with joy; but it was to the ſon, who had never left him, that his father declared, "All that I "have, is thine[32]." "In my Father's "houſe are many manſions[33]," ſays our Lord; doubtleſs thereby intimating diſtinct regions, which as they are removed from the abode of the wicked, ſo are they ſeparated each from the other, and aſſigned as habitations for different orders[34], according to the difference of beatitudes conferred on them, for the greater or leſs degree of their ſpiritual perfection. Thus, although the mercy of God be not ſo limited, as that

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[31] St. Luke, xix. 16—19.

[32] St. Luke, xv. 31. [33] St. John, xiv. 2.

[34] Και ουκ εν τη γεεννη μονον, αλλα και εν τη βασιλεια πολλας εν ενοσι τις διαφορας. CHRYSOST. ad Theodorum Parænn. 1. p. 664. vol. ix. ed. Paris, 1614.

Multitudinem autem locorum non malè veteres intelligunt cum graduum differentiis. GROTIUS.

Quomodo *multæ manſiones* apud Patrem, ſi non pro varietate meritorum? TERTULLIAN quoted by GROTIUS.

DISC. XII. there ſhall be no recompence even to late amendment; yet, in his wiſdom and equity, God will make diſtinction between thoſe who have long perſevered by "patient "continuance in well-doing[35]," and thoſe who have devoted to him only the laſt days and dregs of their life. As in concerns of a temporal nature it commonly happens, ſo in thoſe of a religious kind it ſhall certainly come to paſs, that "whatſoever a man "ſoweth, that he ſhall alſo reap[36]."

The ſum of what has been laid before you, is briefly this. Chriſt has eſtabliſhed a covenant between God and man. God, for reaſons known only to his inſcrutable wiſdom, accepts the death of Chriſt as an atonement for ſins paſt; but requires men to repent of thoſe ſins, and purpoſe real amendment of heart and conduct. God will perform his part of the covenant, if man executes the part on his ſide: but if man, through depravity, fail of diſcharging his obligation, he cannot hope to be benefited by a covenant which he has diſregarded.

[35] Rom. ii. 7. [36] Gal. vi. 7.

No

No one can be at a loſs to decide on his pretenſions for expecting God's promiſes: for taking the rule by which to judge, in a qualified ſenſe, and with all due allowance for the involuntary and unavoidable infirmities of human nature, it is ſimply this; "He that doeth righteouſneſs, is righteous[37]," and the "righteous only ſhall "go into life eternal[38]." No one can begin a courſe of righteouſneſs too early; ſince "God will render to every man according "to his deeds[39];" proportioning the recompence to the comparative[40] proficiency which each may have made in virtue and piety.

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[37] 1 St. John, iii. 7. [38] St. Matt. xxv. 46.

[39] Rom. ii. 6.

[40] See Bp. BULL's Works, vol. i. ed. 1714. Sermon the Seventh; on the "Different Degrees of Bliſs in "Heaven."

DISCOURSE XIII.

On the PREACHING of Our LORD.

ST. MATTHEW, iv. 17.

From that time Jesus began to preach.

DISC. XIII. THOUGH on the work of reformation in the conduct of mankind, our Lord was indeed continually so intent, that he suffered not even common occurrences to pass unnoticed[a], but raised from them

[a] See Sir ISAAC NEWTON's Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel, part i. c. 11. n. (*a*); and Dr. JORTIN's Discourses concerning the Truth of the Christian Religion, vi. 5. Archbishop NEWCOME's Observations on our Lord's Conduct, part i. s. 6. p. 100. ed. 1795. "Quicquid "vitæ communis obtulit, hoc fere vertit in occasionem "docendæ pietatis." Ratio Veræ Theologiæ ERASMI, V. 5. 116. C.

instructions

inſtructions for ſpiritual improvement; yet we often find him alſo diſcourſing not in a general way, but with a more direct view to ſome particular points either of doctrine or information, which he deſigned at each period to communicate. His manner of preaching at theſe ſeaſons varies with the occaſion; ſometimes it is didactic; ſometimes parabolic; ſometimes prophetic. On theſe ſeveral modes of his preaching let us now make ſome remarks. DISC. XIII.

When Chriſt by his miracles [2] had given ſufficient proof that he was endued with more than human power, he proceeded on his miniſtry with encouraging men to cultivate affections of piety; and with enlarging the ſenſe to which interpreters had confined and limited the Moſaic precepts. On thoſe, who through repentance were contrite and afflicted for their ſins; on the meek, the holy, the merciful, the pure, the patient; on thoſe, who would not relinquiſh their virtue and faith through any fears of temporal evil; on all ſuch he pronounced a

[2] St. Matt. iv. 24.

bleſſing.

DISC. XIII. bleſſing[3]. To exemplary conduct and vital principles of real goodneſs he exhorts his diſciples; bidding them not to acquieſce in the bare obſervance of the letter, but rather to obey the ſpirit of the Law; and enjoining them to ſhew the ſincerity of their faith in him, by reſtraining anger and forgiving injuries, by reſiſting irregular paſſions and abandoning ſecret ſins, by avoiding all expreſſions that may derogate from the dignity and the ſanctity of God's name, by extending liberality to all in diſtreſs, without diſtinction of ſect, party, or country; and by bearing even towards enemies a degree of love, which ſhould incline us to treat them with all the kindneſs that prudent regard for our own ſafety can poſſibly admit.

As the end and object of all religion is to turn man unto God, and under a ſenſe of duty towards his Maker to influence his heart and correct his morals, that he may think and act as becomes a ſpiritual being ſenſible of his obligations towards God, duly

[3] St. Matt. v.

eſtimating

eſtimating the rational powers conferred on him, and earneſtly hoping to be bleſſed with Divine approbation both in this and a future life; as this is the end and object of all religion, our Lord in his wiſdom laid the foundation of Chriſtianity in truths reſpecting God and moral goodneſs. DISC. XIII.

After longer intercourſe with his diſciples, he delivers to them parables; and for his adopting this method of preaching, may be aſſigned the following reaſons.

Converſant as they were with the writings of the Old Teſtament, the Jews were acquainted with this manner of inſtruction, which had been uſed by prophets in former ages. The remonſtrance of Jotham[4] with the men of Sichem, and the reproof of Nathan[5] to David, were both conveyed, the one by an appoſite, the other by an intereſting parable, which were well known to our Saviour's diſciples. In ſpeaking therefore to them after this manner, he addreſſed them in a ſtyle ſuited indeed to

[4] Judges, ix. 8. [5] 2 Sam. xii. 1—7.

the

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the genius of Orientals[6] in general, but more particularly calculated to engage the attention of Jews who had been accuſtomed to hear from perſons of prophetic character[7] ſayings of this nature.

The parables of our Lord were moreover all intended for illuſtration to thoſe who came with diſpoſitions to be taught, and who would employ ſome attention in properly applying them. But the degree of illuſtration is not always deſigned to be the ſame. In ſome it is meant the concluſion ſhould be drawn with little difficulty: in others, the inference was purpoſely more obſcure[8].

The

[6] Hoc genus Αινες vel Απολογες vocabant Græci; Latini fabulas: in quo genere plurimùm celebrantur Phrygii illius ſapientis ſcripta, ſive quæ in illius imitationem alii literis mandaverunt.

Bp. LOWTH's "Prælectio de Sacrâ Poeſi Hebræorum," X. p. 126. ed. 1775.

[7] Hanc in poeſi præcipuè propheticâ multùm frequentant vates ſacri, ac præ cæteris omnibus Ezekiel. Ibid.

[8] Faciunt enim parabolæ ad involucrum et velum; faciunt etiam ad lumen et illuſtrationem.

BACON "de Sapientiâ Veterum," Præfatio, vol. ii. p. 349. Q. ed. 1730.

See

The parables which moſt eaſily admit of interpretation are theſe: DISC. XIII.

The Sower[9]; which repreſents the different diſpoſitions of thoſe who would hear the Goſpel, and the different influence that would accordingly be produced by it on their minds and conduct. The Tares[10], and the Net caſt into the Sea[11]; which intimate the mixture of good and bad men under the Goſpel, as under all other diſpenſations; yet that, upon the whole, it is better the puniſhment of the wicked ſhould be delayed to the conſummation of all things, than that it ſhould be ſpeedily[12] executed. The Grain, and the Leaven[13]; of which, the one ſignifies the growing extent of the Goſpel from an inconſiderable beginning; the other, that change which ſilently and gradually it ſhould produce in the hearts and actions of men. The hidden

See alſo Lib. 2. "de Augmentis Scientiarum," vol. i. p. 80. At Poeſis Parabolica, &c.

[9] St. Matt. xiii. 3. [10] St. Matt. xiii. 24.

[11] St. Matt. xiii. 47.

[12] See Bp. SHERLOCK's Diſcourſe VIII. vol. iii.

[13] St. Matt. xiii. 31—33.

Treaſure,

DISC. XIII. Treaſure, and Pearl of great Price [14]; which teach us that the Goſpel is of value ſo ineſtimable, that to the poſſeſſion of it ſhould be ſacrificed all conſiderations. The unmerciful Servant [15]; whence we learn, that if we hope to receive forgiveneſs of our own ſins from God, we muſt pardon the offences men have committed againſt us. The Ten Virgins [16]; which gives a leſſon on the neceſſity of vigilance in the work of pious and moral conduct at all ſeaſons, ſince we know not how ſoon we may die, and as we die, ſo ſhall we be judged. The different Talents [17]; by which we are exhorted to make a proper uſe of the ſeveral gifts imparted to us by Providence, be they external or internal, bodily or mental. The good Samaritan [18]; which inculcates charity as due to all men, however they may differ from us either by national connexion or in religious perſuaſion. The rich Man enlarging his barns [19]; whoſe example ſhews

[14] St. Matt. xiii. 44, 5.
[15] St. Matt. xviii. 23.
[16] St. Matt. xxv. 1.
[17] St. Matt. xxv. 15.
[18] St. Luke, x. 30.
[19] St. Luke, xii. 16.

the

the folly of ſuch immoderate attachment to our poſſeſſions, as ſhall make us forget God and our latter end. The unjuſt Steward[20]; which intimates to us, that we ſhould make conducive to our ſalvation the various natural, moral, and ſpiritual gifts with which we are entruſted by God for his glory; and admoniſhes us alſo, that we ſhould be equally attentive to religious concerns, as the moſt artful and iniquitous are intent on deviſing means by which to gain pecuniary advantages. The Prodigal Son[21]; which encourages us to hope, that God will be merciful to us if we ſincerely repent. The rich Man and Lazarus[22]; teaching us the miſery in which muſt terminate that careleſs indifference to religious concerns, ſo frequently found in a voluptuous life. The Widow importuning the unjuſt Judge[23]; which enforces perſeverance in prayer. The Publican and Phariſee[24]; in com- DISC. XIII.

[20] St. Luke, xvi. 8.
[21] St. Luke, xv. 11.
[22] St. Luke, xvi. 19.
[23] St. Luke, xviii. 2.
[24] St. Luke, xviii. 9.

mendation

DISC. XIII. mendation of humility, and reproof of ſelf-righteouſneſs.

All theſe parables to a conſiderate mind would give illuſtration, if they were taken according to the deſign with which they were delivered; a deſign [25], which meant not to preſerve, between the ſimilitude and ſubject, an exact correſpondence of minute parts; but to mark between them ſuch a reſemblance in the general outline, as that the ſubject might be placed in a more ſtriking light; and that the principal truth to be inculcated might be diſcerned without much labour of inveſtigation. And for this purpoſe, as it was unneceſſary to regard conformity in the ſeveral circumſtances, ſo

[25] Minimè quidem neceſſarium eſt, ut in omni parabolâ per omnia accuratè conſtet ſimilitudinis ratio; hoc interdum concinnitatis cujuſdam nimis minutæ potius eſſet.

De Sacrâ Poeſi Hebræorum Prælect. 10. p. 129.

See alſo Archbiſhop NEWCOME on "Our Lord's Conduct," p. 144. ed. 1795.

And GLASSIUS: In parabolis enim nec poſſunt nec debent omnia ad rem primario intellectam accommodari; ſed ea tantùm quæ proximè ſcopum dicentis ſpectant.'

Philologiæ Sacræ, L. 2. p. 1. Tr. 2. ſ. 4. art. 2. p. 218.

it was perfectly indifferent whether the ſtory introduced were taken from real life, or were altogether fictitious; and whether the characters[26] were good or bad. The reflection, which was to be made on the whole, was the principal object: and if the parable taken together impreſſes on the mind that ſentiment, which was the ſcope of it, the intent of teaching by that mode is fully anſwered. DISC. XIII.

The parables that could not be ſo readily explained, becauſe alluding to events which at the time our Lord ſpake did not ſeem probable, and therefore were incomprehenſible to the generality of his audience, were theſe:

The Labourers in the Vineyard[27]; intimating that to the ſpiritual bleſſings of Chriſtianity the Gentiles ſhould be admitted equally with the Jews, who had hitherto been the ſole worſhippers of the true God.

[26] Hiſtoria eſt narratio rei verè geſtæ: parabola verò rei fictæ et ad docendum aptè concinnatæ. Ibid.

Among an infinitude of other very judicious and ſatisfactory remarks, which abound in "POOLE'S ANNOTATIONS," are two pertinent Notes on St. Matt. xiii. 2. and St. Luke, xvi. 8.

[27] St. Matt. xx. 1.

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The Husbandmen who slew the Heir[28], and seized on the Vineyard; signifying the insults which the Jews had offered to a succession of former prophets; the death which they were now meditating against our Lord himself; and the Divine vengeance which awaited them for this last act of iniquity. The Marriage of the King's Son[29]; predicting that the Jews should be rejected, and the Gentiles invited to the Christian dispensation: but though among the Gentiles many would be called to the knowledge of the Gospel by the preaching of its Ministers, yet, comparatively speaking, few would so prepare themselves by holiness of life as to be objects of Divine approbation. The Fig-tree fruitless for three Years[30]; which implies, that Christ had in vain looked for repentance and reformation among the Jews; their state therefore should be destroyed, and their nation scattered.

These parables could not be solved with equal facility as the others were expounded;

[28] St. Matt. xxi. 33. [29] St. Matt. xxii. 1.
[30] St. Luke, xiii. 6.

because

becauſe nothing but the accompliſhment of extraordinary circumſtances could throw on them light ſufficient for the full apprehending of them. And our Lord purpoſely foretold thoſe events with a degree of obſcurity, that the indignation of the Scribes and Phariſees might not be raiſed to a degree of ſudden madneſs, which ſhould precipitate his death before his miniſtry was completed, and before the time appointed for the ſacrifice of himſelf was duly arrived. DISC. XIII.

Thus then did our Lord ſpeak in parables, of which thoſe that inculcated evangelical duties were eaſy to be explained, but thoſe that predicted the approaching change in the Jewiſh ſtate, and the eſtabliſhment of the Goſpel diſpenſation, were leſs obvious to interpretation. And this manner of teaching he appears to have adopted, partly in imitation of former Prophets, and partly with the view of making diſtinction[31] between thoſe who really wiſhed to be informed, and others who were obſtinately

[31] St. Matt. xiii. 11.

DISC. XIII. and wilfully determined *not* to be convinced. To the former, he purpoſed that his words ſhould convey inſtruction upon that due exerciſe of their thoughts, which he knew they would beſtow: to the latter[32], he meant that his parables ſhould be as ſounds only, ſince they would employ not the ſmalleſt conſideration to inveſtigate the ſenſe. In this manner it happens in natu-

[32] No parables could be thought too obſcure for them, upon whom the plaineſt doctrines and the teſtimony of miracles had been thrown away.

Dr. JORTIN's vol. ii. Serm. XII. p. 236. ed. 1771.

ERASMUS, the exemplar and favourite writer of his biographer Dr. JORTIN, on our LORD's uſe of parables remarks thus:

"Sive id Chriſto viſum eſt, quo prophetarum ſermonem, "cui Judæorum aures adſueverant, referret: ſive hâc difficultate ſegnitiem noſtram exercere voluit, ut poſtea "gratior eſſet fructus, non ſine negotio quæſitus: ſive hoc "conſilio ſua myſteria profanis et impiis operta celataque "eſſe voluit, at ſic, ut interim piis ſcrutatoribus non in"tercluderetur adſequendi ſpes: ſive genus hoc dictionis "potiſſimum placuit, quod ut ad perſuadendum cum "primis efficax eſt, ita doctis pariter et indoctis expoſitum "& familiare, maximèque ſecundum naturam."

Ratio Veræ Theologiæ. ERASM. Op. V. 5. p. 117. A.

See alſo Dr. TOWNSON's Sermon on "The Manner of "our Saviour's Teaching," ſubjoined to his ingenious Diſcourſes on the Goſpels, p. 283. ed. 2.

ral

ral religion. God ſpeaks to us by his works. He is underſtood by thoſe who maturely reflect on them: but He is neither heard nor ſeen by others, who behold his works with indifference. It is neither the province, nor the nature, nor commonly ſpeaking, in the power of religion to force conviction: it recommends itſelf to the underſtanding of every obſerving perſon; but if man will not obſerve, nor apply his underſtanding, it leaves him to purſue his own inattention, and to take the conſequences of ſuch irrational conduct. As a knowledge of God is not palpable to the thoughtleſs, ſo neither was a knowledge of the Goſpel to be attained by men to whom it appeared unworthy of regard. And thus did the Son of God act in perfect analogy with the wiſdom of his Almighty Father; and the diſpenſations of nature and grace are both calculated for Beings endued with reaſon. From the very frame of our conſtitution, bodily and mental, we are required to uſe that reaſon in ſearching after truth; but we are nevertheleſs free not to uſe our reaſon

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DISC. XIII. properly, if we love brutiſh ſtupidity rather than improvement of intellect; if we prefer darkneſs to light and evil to good; if we would alienate ourſelves from God for the ſake of degrading vices that muſt ſink us in the ſcale of rational creatures and muſt terminate in miſery. Man hath liberty to chooſe either life or death: but when he hath made his choice, if it be on the worſe part, let him not reproach his Maker, who gave him reaſon and created him free. Let God be juſtified, but man ſelf-condemned for his own egregious folly.

The prophecies delivered by our Lord come next to be conſidered. When by his diſcourſes and miracles he had evidently proved his Divine miſſion, he begins to forewarn his diſciples of the great events which were ſoon to befal himſelf; events, of which ſome would in the firſt place ſo aſtoniſh them as even to make them diſbelieve his pretenſions to the title of Meſſiah; when others again ſhould operate on their minds with ſuch ſtrong conviction, that no puniſhment, no torments, not the fear of death

death itſelf, could poſſibly induce them to deny what their own eyes had ſeen, and their own ears had heard. "That he "muſt go to Jeruſalem; muſt ſuffer many "things of the elders, the chief prieſts, and "the ſcribes; muſt be killed; and be raiſed "again the third day," was the firſt[33] intimation of his approaching end, ſuggeſted to his hearers. The bare mention of his ſufferings was received with diſapprobation, inſomuch that our Lord inſtantly paſſed to an earneſt exhortation, by which to animate his diſciples againſt renouncing their faith through fear of afflictions[34]: and at a period not far diſtant, having exhibited himſelf in a glorified form, he again impreſſes on their minds the reſurrection, as a circumſtance to which they ſhould look forward with peculiar attention; ſince it was to produce an effect entirely contrary to the doubts and apprehenſions which would be raiſed in their hearts by his intermediate humiliation. We find our Lord a ſecond time predicting the evils that awaited him,

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[33] St. Matt. xvi. 21. [34] St. Matt. xvi. 24.

DISC. XIII. in terms ſimilar to thoſe before uſed; with the addition however of a circumſtance more expreſs and particular as to the *manner* in which the rulers ſhould be enabled to apprehend him; "the Son of Man ſhall "be *betrayed* into the hands of men[35]." Endued as he was with power to diſcern the thoughts[36] of men, he foreſaw the treachery which Judas was meditating; but did not yet openly announce it to his diſciples, that one amongſt themſelves would be inſtrumental to his death. A third time he foretells what was to be accompliſhed in him; and is now more circumſtantial than in the former prediction: for not only the treachery, but the delivering[37] of him "to "the Gentiles, to mock, and to ſcourge, "and to crucify him," is here ſpecified; after which it is added alſo, "and the third "day he ſhall riſe again." A fourth time he ſpeaks of what was to follow, and limits the tranſaction to a period ſo near, that it

[35] St. Matt. xvii. 22.
[36] St. John, ii. 24. St. Matt. ix. 4. St. Mark, xii. 15.
[37] St. Matt. xx. 19.

might

might be ſaid he was already betrayed[38]. He renews the ſame ſubject a fifth and laſt time, explicitly declaring that one of his own diſciples, even he who at that moment was eating with him, would be the perſon to betray him[39]: and after the ſolemn inſtitution of a ſacred rite, which was to be continued as a perpetual memorial of his death, he forewarns them of the apoſtaſy with which they would deſert him; but conſoles them with a promiſe of returning to them again, when he was riſen[40]. DISC. XIII.

In the manner of delivering theſe predictions, remarkable is the tenderneſs with which our Lord unfolded the particulars of his death by a gradual declaration of circumſtances; circumſtances which, if abruptly and unſeaſonably introduced all at the ſame time, would immediately have overwhelmed his diſciples with perplexity and ſorrow. By degrees therefore he habituates them to think of his ſufferings; prepares them for what would enſue, by adding progreſſively

[38] St. Matt. xxvi. 2. [39] St. Matt. xxvi. 21.
[40] St. Matt. xxvi. 32.

ſome

DISC. XIII. ſome fact not mentioned before; and reſerves the moſt bitter and aggravating conſideration, that he ſhould be betrayed by one of his own diſciples, to the very ſeaſon when that event was to take place.

On the ſubjects of theſe prophecies it is to be obſerved, that his foretelling crucifixion, as the mode by which he ſhould ſuffer, was a proof of his poſſeſſing Divine preſcience: for, as crucifixion was not a Jewiſh, but a Roman puniſhment, and he had committed no crime which ſhould make him obnoxious to the Roman governor, ſo it ſeemed not probable[41] to human apprehenſion that by the Roman law he ſhould be crucified, and not by the Jewiſh law ſtoned.

The limiting[42] of his reſurrection to the *third day*, gave ſtrong preſumption, even before he roſe, that his former aſſertions had been founded in truth; for had he

[41] See note on St. Matt. xx. 19. in Sect. 142. of Dr. DODDRIDGE's "Family Expoſitor."

[42] See p. 287. of Archbiſhop NEWCOME's "Obſervations on our Lord's Conduct," ed. 1795.

ſpoken

ſpoken otherwiſe than according to truth, he would not have reſted the whole veracity and validity of his miſſion on an event that was to happen within a ſpace ſo very ſhort; but would have built it on ſome fact, which the generation then preſent could never have ſeen. But as the caſe now ſtands, we are to remain in a ſtate of ſuſpenſe only *three* days, and then it ſhall be manifeſted by the reſurrection of a perſon, whoſe ſide ſhall be pierced, whoſe body ſhall be buried, and who ſhall lie in the grave two nights and one whole day; by the reſurrection of ſuch a perſon within ſo brief an interval as that of *three* days, it ſhall be manifeſted whether he did or did not ſpeak truth. A more fair teſt of ſincerity could not be propoſed, nor could pretenſions be placed on an iſſue more palpable: here could be no miſapprehenſion, no miſtake: the crucifixion was notorious, the wounds viſible, the burial uncontroverted: on the queſtion, whether our Lord did or did not riſe from the dead, turns the principal argument either for or againſt the truth of Chriſtianity. DISC. XIII.

That

DISC. XIII. That he did riſe, is a fact aſſerted by poſitive hiſtory, and confirmed by collateral evidence, ſtrongly and authentically as any fact[43] whatever, in the records of any age or country that has ever exiſted.

That the Jews ſhould be puniſhed for their infidelity and wickedneſs, had been intimated by ſeveral prophetic parables; but towards the cloſe of his miniſtry, our Lord ſpeaks in more direct terms of the calamities which awaited their nation. Perſecuted though he had been by the chief perſons among them, and foreſeeing as he did the aggravated cruelty with which they would ſoon deſtroy him, yet with compaſſion he ſoftened the ſeverity of his judgment; "he wept[44] over the city," the deſolation of which he foretold; and bewailed[45] moſt pathetically the blindneſs and obſtinacy which had darkened their underſtandings, and hardened their hearts againſt the evi-

[43] See Bp. SHERLOCK's Trial of the Witneſſes; WEST on the Reſurrection; PALEY's Evidences; LARDNER's Credibility of the Goſpel Hiſtory.

[44] St. Luke, xix. 41. [45] St. Matt. xxiii. 37.

dences

dences he had produced in ſupport of his juſt claim to the title of Meſſiah! In the predictions concerning the fall of the Temple and of Jeruſalem, we are to obſerve not only the circumſtantial manner in which events, at that time improbable[46], are diſtinctly marked out; but the exact period, within which the accompliſhment of theſe facts was expreſsly confined. The generation[47] then exiſting was not to paſs away; that is, forty years were not to elapſe, before theſe predictions would be verified: and therefore it was not beyond the courſe of nature to imagine, that many of thoſe who then heard him would be alive at the concluſion of the determinate æra, and would have ocular demonſtration how far DISC. XIII.

[46] "In the reign of Tiberius there was no appearance "of ſuch an event, and much leſs of the various circum- "ſtances attending it, which he foretold. The Romans "had no intereſt to deſtroy and depopulate a country "which was ſubject to them, and whence they reaped "many advantages; and the Jews had not ſtrength to "hope for ſucceſs in a war againſt them."

Dr. JORTIN's "Remarks on Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory," p. 77. vol. i. edit. 1751.

[47] St. Matt. xxiv. 34.

his

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his prophecies were or were not fulfilled. In this case, therefore, as in that of the resurrection, our Lord rests his pretensions to veracity on a fact, the accomplishment of which was circumscribed within a given space of time; a fact too, so palpable in its nature, that it could not possibly admit of a doubt whether it did or did not happen: for the destruction of a city like Jerusalem must be an event so extraordinary, that the whole Roman empire must hear of its demolition. Here then is another presumption that our Lord spake truth, arising from a second instance of limitation assigned to the period in which his prediction was to be fulfilled; and that presumption is changed into positive proof, by the manner in which within the prefixed period his prophecies were not only fulfilled in a general way, but almost literally accomplished in every minute[48] and particular incident: and the evidence produced from the completion of

[48] See Bishop NEWTON's Dissertations XVIII. XIX. XX. XXI. on the Prophecies; and Archbishop NEWCOME's "Observations on our Lord's Conduct," p. 212—276. ed. 1795.

prophecies

prophecies reſpecting Jeruſalem is ſo irre- DISC.
fragable, that its force can be evaded by XIII.
nothing but the diſingenuous ſhift of recurring to a ſuppoſition contradicted by hiſtories, the date of which hiſtories is aſcertained with equal preciſion as the date of any ancient writings can poſſibly be aſcertained. And there is wanting neither internal proof, nor current opinion from the earlieſt ages of Chriſtianity, that three of the Goſpels were written antecedently to the fall of Jeruſalem [49].

Having remarked thus much on the morals, the parables, and prophecies of Chriſt, we may draw a concluſion which will ſcarcely be controverted, viz. that they evince in him a degree of wiſdom not commonly found among men. But let us now

[49] See Biſhop NEWTON's Diſſertation XVIII. p. 226. vol. ii. edit. 1771.

Dr. PALEY's Evidences, p. 86. vol. ii. ed. 1ſt.

Dr. LARDNER's Works, ed. 1788, vol. vi. p. 38—44. and ibid. p. 145.

Dr. JORTIN's "Remarks on Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory," vol. i. p. 72. where the reader will find many minute circumſtances of internal proof judiciouſly obſerved.

DISC. XIII. aſk, "whence[50] had Chriſt this wiſdom?" As it is a queſtion of importance, and therefore deſerves to be fairly diſcuſſed, with all humility and lowlineſs of mind let us proceed on an enquiry, the reſult of which will be a ſtrong confirmation of our faith in Chriſt as the SAVIOUR through whom we have redemption, and as the LORD whom we are bound to worſhip and obey.

Conſidering then, yet with profound reverence, the human nature of our Lord, we can diſcover but four poſſible ways by which his mind could be thus enlightened; and theſe are, either by the aid of inſtructors, or by the ſtudy of writings, or by ſuperior underſtanding, or by Divine communication.

The learning of the Jews was in general confined to a knowledge of the law, the prophets, the Hagiographa[51], and traditions.

[50] St. Matt. xiii. 54. Dr. PALEY hath put the ſame queſtion: and the reader cannot do better than ſee how it is anſweted in the "Evidences," vol. ii. p. 136. ed. 1ſt, p. 152.

[51] See GRAY's "Key to the Old Teſtament," Introduction, p. 10. ed. 2d.

Whatever

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Whatever inſtruction was imparted to Chriſt, muſt have proceeded either from his reputed parents [52], or from the Scribes who were teachers [53] in their ſchools and ſynagogues. From the one, it is probable he could hear nothing but the plain letter of the Scriptures: from the other, he would receive expoſitions correſponding with the tenets either of the Phariſees [54], or Sadducees, or Eſſenes. But the refined interpretation of the moral law, which is the peculiar beauty of the ſermon on the Mount, as it far exceeds the ſimplicity in which his parents muſt have taught him, ſo it partakes not of any principle that *characteriſes* either of the ſects which in his days prevailed. It encourages neither the looſe [55] morals of the Sadducees, nor the formal and traditional obſervances of the Phariſees, nor the exceſ-

[52] See MACKNIGHT'S Harmony, Note. ſ. 13.

[53] See "The Old and New Teſtament connected," &c. by Dr. PRIDEAUX, part ii. b. 5. ſ. 4. p. 483. vol. iii. edit. 1749.

[54] See PRIDEAUX, part ii. b. 5. ſ. 2. &c.

[55] See PRIDEAUX, part ii. b. 5. ſ. 2. p. 472. vol. iii.

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five auſterities of the Eſſenes[56]. It is enlarged to the extent which the ſpirit of the Law will fairly juſtify; it abrogates tradition and merely external ſervice; it accommodates itſelf to every condition of ſocial life. Theſe peculiarities, which diſtinguiſh the Goſpel morality from all the doctrines then adopted by the Jews, are evident proofs, that although our Lord undoubtedly heard the Scriptures both read and explained by others[57]; yet his mode of interpretation

[56] "He never provokes our diſguſt by the fourneſs of "the miſanthrope; or our contempt, by the *inactivity* of "the recluſe. He never affected gloomy auſterity; nor "ſought to be ſequeſtered from the world, in order to "preſerve the ſpirituality of his mind."

See the whole of Sermon V. in the Bampton Lectures, preached by Dr. WHITE.

[57] His parents found him at an early age "in an apart-"ment of the Temple, where the teachers of the Law "uſed to lecture upon it to the people; and where young "perſons in particular were examined, and had a liberty "to aſk what queſtions they thought proper, for their "farther information."

DODDRIDGE on St. Luke, ii. 46.

On that occaſion he confirmed the remark of the Evangeliſt, that Chriſt "waxed ſtrong in ſpirit; filled with "wiſdom; and the grace of God was upon him." St. Luke, ii. 40.

is so far his own, as not to be the effect of any instruction derived from teachers; because there were no teachers capable of giving him this interpretation. But were the case otherwise, and had he been instructed to a degree not common among the Jews of his age, still the aid of instructors could have extended no farther than to the communication of knowledge in the moral science; it could have availed him nothing in the conception of parables, and the prediction of future events. The aid of instructors therefore is totally inadequate to account for his wisdom. DISC. XIII.

That every part of the sacred writings was known by the mind of our Lord, is obvious from his frequent reference to passages in various parts of the Old Testament: and to some of these he most probably alluded in the former part of his sermon on the mount[58]. The Psalmist declares, "The "Lord is nigh unto them that are of a "broken heart, and saveth such as are of a

[58] See CHRYSOSTOM, vol. vii. p. 693. edit. Paris, 1616.

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" contrite ſpirit[59]:" our Lord pronounces a benediction[60] on " the poor in ſpirit" and " on thoſe that mourn." In Iſaiah it is ſaid, " To this man will I look, even to " him that is poor and of a contrite ſpirit, " and trembleth at my word[61]:" the promiſe of our Lord is, " Bleſſed are the " meek." The Pſalmiſt aſſerts, that he only can ſerve God acceptably, who has " clean hands and a pure heart[62]:" in our Saviour's words, " Bleſſed are the pure in " heart."

When he had finiſhed the beatitudes, he profeſſedly enters on the moral laws of Moſes. To remove the falſe interpretations by which the Scribes and Phariſees had obſcured the beauty and perverted the excellence of the moral law, was a conſiderable[63] object of his miſſion.

[59] Pſ. xxxiv. 18. See alſo Pſ. li. 17.

[60] St. Matt. v.

[61] Iſ. lxvi. 2. See alſo Mic. vi. 8.

[62] Pſ. xxiv. 4.

[63] See " The Jewiſh Law vindicated," in Sermons X. and XI. by the late Dr. RANDOLPH.

The

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The prohibition of murder in the ſixth commandment, the Jews had limited merely to the literal interpretation. Our Lord extends it to the forbidding of ſuch anger and malice, as may in their conſequences lead to murder. And on this occaſion he ſeems to have enlarged on theſe words of Moſes; "Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother in thine "heart; thou ſhalt not avenge, nor bear "any grudge againſt the children of thy "people; but thou ſhalt love thy neigh-"bour as thyſelf[64]." Which laſt expreſſion the teachers of the Law had ſo miſinterpreted, as to make it imply that an enemy might be hated[65]. Our Lord corrects this improper expoſition: in doing which he may be conceived to have in his view, either the humane precept of Moſes, which ordains, "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or "his aſs going aſtray, thou ſhalt ſurely "bring it back to him again: if thou ſee "the aſs of him that hateth thee lying under "his burden, and wouldeſt forbear to help

[64] Levit. xix. 17, 18. [65] St. Matt. v. 43.

DISC. XIII. " him, thou ſhalt ſurely help with him[66]." For if even the beaſt of an enemy were thus to be aſſiſted, much more were his own perſon to be relieved from diſtreſs. Or our Lord may have adverted to this admonition of Solomon; " If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be " thirſty, give him water to drink[67]." In that comprehenſive ſummary of relative and ſocial duty, " Whatſoever ye would that " men ſhould do unto you, do ye even ſo " to them[68]," it is not impoſſible that our Lord might have in his thoughts the inſtruction of Tobit, " Do that to no man, " which thou hateſt[69]." But on all theſe occaſions, the words of our Lord are of greater force and wider extent than what immediately appear in the terms of the Old Teſtament. In his general rule of conduct, for inſtance, our Lord does not confine

[66] Exod. xxiii. 4, 5. The humane regard which is had even to fowls of the air and brute animals, is ſingular and admirable in the Moſaic law.

[67] Prov. xxv. 21. [68] St. Matt. vii. 12.

[69] Tobit, iv. 15.

himſelf

himself to a negative prohibition, but enjoins a positive duty[70]. Universal charity he inculcates in the emphatic words, "Love "your enemies; bless them that curse you; "do good to them that hate you; and pray "for them that despitefully use and perse-"cute you[71]." And to language of reproach that proceeds from malicious thoughts, he threatens the severity of future punishment[72]. Well therefore may he be said to have *made full* the moral law, not only by restoring its original purity, but by adding to it an energy and latitude of meaning which before it did not possess[73]." It was indeed at all times in itself "Holy, "just, and good[74]:" but as the latter dispensation was always designed to be the DISC. XIII.

[70] GROTIUS's remark.

[71] St. Matt. v. 44. [72] Ibid. v. 22.

[73] "Μη νομισητε ὁτι ηλθον καταλυσαι τον Νομον η τας προφη-"τας." Τουτ' ἐστι, μελλω τινα λεγειν τελειοτερα των προτερων ειρημενων. CHRYSOSTOM, vol. vii. p. 693. D. ed. 1616.

Μη τοινυν νομισητε καταλυσιν ειναι την τελειωσιν· ου γαρ ἐστι καταλυσις, αλλα πληρωσις. Ibid. p. 694. A.

[74] Rom. vii. 12. See "The Jewish Law vindicated," by Dr. RANDOLPH.

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more excellent covenant, it was reſerved for Chriſt in his appointed time to dilate precepts which heretofore had been delivered with the brevity of elementary principles.

When we hear our Lord thus expounding and eſtabliſhing morals, it is not enough to obſerve the comprehenſion with which he embraced all that was intrinſically virtuous in the Law and the Prophets; but it ſhould farther be remarked, that although he did indeed make the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament the ground of his doctrine, yet by the *manner* in which he treats his ſubjects, the moral precepts of all who went before him aſſume a different and more ſtriking appearance; inſomuch that they come from him in a great degree *new:* new, not only to the audience in whoſe hearing they were explained, and to whom, from their being ſet forth without the veil of gloſſes, they really were new; but, comparatively ſpeaking, they are new to us, who have the letter of Scripture with which to contraſt our Lord's interpretation. Pa-

dience under injuries and charity unbounded, however they may be deduced from the commands and admonitions contained in the Old Teſtament, cannot yet be ſaid to meet our view as *prominent features* in the Law and the Prophets: much leſs is reſtraint on the very firſt conceptions of inordinate propenſity a leading character in thoſe ancient writings. But forbearance, benevolence, and purity of intention, are the very life and eſſence of Chriſtian morality, preſenting themſelves in every page, and interwoven in every letter of the Goſpel. DISC. XIII.

Hence then it appears, that however Chriſt may have laid the foundation of his wiſdom in Scripture-knowledge, yet the ſuperſtructure which he raiſed is the work of his own mind. For, in his manner of elucidating former precepts, and in making the exerciſe of kind affections and the repreſſion of irregular thoughts ſo indiſpenſably neceſſary, as that they ſhould be diſtinguiſhing marks of ſincerity in his diſciples;

in

DISC. XIII. in these very material and discriminating points our Lord derived his wisdom from no Jewish writings.

For the sake of argument, let us now conceive that our Lord might have been acquainted with the writings of Greece, and that he might have remarked in them some tenets confessedly excellent. That from those writings he should adopt any precepts corresponding with doctrines of morality already found in the Old Testament, would have been unnecessary; that supposition therefore is out of the question, because nugatory. But let us imagine he might have observed in them, two maxims which appear most similar to his own characteristics; these for instance; "whatever injury "we may have sustained from another per- "son, yet we ought not to do him an in- "jury in return[75];" and "it is equally "criminal to intend[76], as to commit a "wicked action." Now as to the first of

[75] See PLATO's Phædo p. 140. in Forster's edition.
[76] HERODOTUS, b. vi. f. 86.

these

theſe maxims, although we ſhould grant (what however there is reaſon to doubt[77]) that it is deſigned to be of univerſal application, yet when it is compared with the Chriſtian doctrine of forgiveneſs, it falls ſhort in the *principle* on which it is founded: for it conſiders only the *injuſtice*[78] of retaliation: it does not originate from a ſenſe of benevolence due to all mankind, as being all brethren and equally the offſpring of the ſame God; much leſs does it ariſe from conviction that every man has need of imploring Divine mercy for himſelf, and therefore ought to exerciſe mercy towards his fellow-creatures. But theſe are the *princi-* DISC. XIII.

[77] See "The Advantage and Neceſſity of the Chriſtian "Revelation," by Dr. LELAND, part ii. c. 8. p. 122. edit. 1768.

[78] Το γαρ μη κακως ποιειν ανθρωπους, τη αδικειν εστιν διαφερει. PHÆDO.

But the more popular maxims were:

Τον φιλον κακως μη λεγε, μηδ' εν τον εχθρον, ασυλλογιστον γαρ τουτον. STOBÆUS, Serm. XXVIII.

Φιλοις ευνοει· εχθρες αμυνε. Ibid.

Ὑβριν αμυνε. Ibid.

"Ultionis exactionem Ariſtoteles, et Cicero, in virtutis "parte ponunt," ſays GROTIUS, L. ii. 13. De Verit. Chriſt. Rel.

ples

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ples from which the Chriſtian doctrine of forgiveneſs proceeds; principles, more wide in extent and more powerful in energy than the philoſophic *motive:* for the benevolence of charity is more enlarged, active, and humane in its operations; and the perſuaſion that giving pardon is an indiſpenſable condition for receiving Divine pardon, is more forcible in its effect than any abſtract idea of juſtice can poſſibly be.

With reſpect to the other maxim, *that* alſo ſeems limited to *injuſtice* only, and not in the ſmalleſt degree applicable to the *immorality* of gratifying our irregular deſires. Nor does it appear, that in the opinion of philoſophers indulgence of ſenſuality, under certain reſtrictions, was deemed culpable. There was indeed a ſect[79] which, like the Eſſenes, diſcouraged wedlock: but that was an exceſs of auſterity not correſponding with the condition of mankind, and therefore warrantable by no law divine or human,

[79] See Dr. MUSGRAVE's firſt Note on the Hippolytus of Euripides. "Deinde autem ſeveriſſimæ Philoſophiæ, "nempe Orphicæ, ſe addixerat," &c.

and

and conſequently deſerving no regard. We are to ſpeak of thoſe who allowed marriage, and prohibited adultery: *they* did not univerſally forbid acts of licentiouſneſs [80] which Chriſtianity at all times condemns as contrary to good morals. But for the effectual prevention of ſuch acts, our Lord lays a reſtraint, which is meant to operate uniformly and indiſpenſably on the firſt thought that is impure; and bids us diſcard vicious propenſities, though the labour of doing it be painful "as plucking out a right eye, "or cutting off a right hand [81]." This is to ſtrike directly and conſtantly at the very root [82] of ſenſuality: it guards the heart from ever giving encouragement to irregular deſires: and thus to a degree, not obviouſly apparent among the philoſophers, who either preceded or lived in the age of our Saviour, it prepares man for cultivating his nobler faculties, intellect and reaſon, and

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[80] See "The Advantage," &c. by Dr. LELAND, part ii. c. 8. p. 133.

[81] St. Matt. v. 29, 30.

[82] See Dr. PALEY's "Evidences," vol. ii. p. 111. ed. 1ſt.

raiſes

DISC. XIII. raiſes his mind to the high duties of morality and religion.

It cannot be affirmed as a matter of certainty, that the writings of philoſophers either antecedent to the æra of our Saviour, or contemporary with it, did not contain other moral precepts, which at firſt view might ſeem to have ſome correſpondence with the diſtinguiſhing tenets of Goſpel morality. Let the reverſe be ſuppoſed: and let it be imagined that our Lord ſaw in them other precepts[83] reſembling his own. Yet,

[83] Some ſuch for inſtance in Greek, as this remark of OVID in Latin:

Quæ quia non licuit, non facit, illa facit.
Ut jam ſervâris bene corpus, adultera mens eſt,
Omnibus excluſis intus adulter erit.

Quoted by GROTIUS in L. iv. ſ. 12. de Verit. Chr. Rel.

Did any ſimilar paſſages of refined morality in the Greek writings, before the Chriſtian æra, occur to recollection, they ſhould on no account be ſuppreſſed. For it is anxiouſly wiſhed that the queſtion ſhould be fairly met. Beſides; every demonſtration of correſpondence ſubſiſting between natural and revealed religion in doctrines intrinſically good, is an additional proof of Divine origin in Chriſtianity: for it was one object of our Lord, to reſtore the original moral law to the priſtine purity in which it was

Yet, if we are allowed to judge either from the entire works, or fragments, or accounts of Grecian authors now extant, we may conclude almoſt to a poſitive certainty on two very material points: they are, that no philoſopher whatever laid the foundation of his morals in repentance for ſins paſt *on a principle of religion and of duty towards* GOD; and that no one gave a promiſe of Divine pardon to repentance of this nature, and proceeding from ſuch a principle: on the contrary, there is much reaſon to ſuppoſe that the Greek philoſophers had no idea of that repentance which ſprings from "Godly ſorrow[84]; and as for any aſſurance of

was delivered by God to Adam; and thus to ſhew that he was co-operating with God in the work of reformation he had undertaken.

[84] Λυπη κατα Θεον. St. Paul, 2 Cor. vii. 10. *i. e.* "vel "quòd Deum offendiſtis peccatis: vel ex amore Dei et "juſtitiæ: vel eo dolore qui a Dei Spiritu manat et Deo "acceptus eſt: vel convenienter Divinæ voluntati."

POLE's Synopſis.

Among the ſayings of the "Επτα Σοφων" in STOBÆUS, Serm. XXVIII. we find πραττε αμετανοητως· ἁμαρτανων μετανοει. but it is delivered as a *prudential*, not a *religious* maxim:

DISC. XIII. of Divine mercy upon ſuch repentance, *that* no one *could* give. It muſt however be granted, that the beginning of moral inſtruction could commence from nothing ſo properly as from exhortations, that ſhould induce men to be aſhamed and ſorry for their paſt offences againſt God and virtue:

maxim: it ſuggeſts cautious deliberation before we begin to act, and ſpeedy amending of any error committed through haſte, when we have acted, in concerns of this life. With the reſtriction then of the aſſertion to the *principle* and *nature* of Chriſtian repentance, the remark of Dr. BURNET is accurate: "If repentance be not always ſure "of pardon, how can it be depended on? It is certain, "of itſelf it cannot; and the heathen world never did de- "pend upon it: nay, it does not appear they *ever had* "any notion of it; for I do not find it once mentioned in "any of their writings." BOYLE's Lectures, V.iii. p. 479.

Amendment of life (ſays Dr. JORTIN) is a comely and commendable thing; and the *Pagans* certainly approved it; but that part of repentance which is a religious ſorrow, an acknowledgment of paſt offences to God our Maker and Governor, and prayers to him to forgive them, the Gentiles ſeem in a great meaſure to have overlooked, both in the courſe of their life, and at the cloſe of it.

Dr. JORTIN's "Diſcourſes concerning the "Chriſtian Religion," p. 265. ed. 1768.

The (Chriſtian) doctrine of repentance Nature never taught in her ſchool, neither was it ever found in the books of the learned. *John Hale*; quoted ibid.

nor

nor could any motive to repentance of this nature be ſo perſuaſive and cogent, as an abſolute promiſe of pardon from Almighty God, which implies a proſpect of happineſs in a future ſtate. Here then our Lord, as a teacher of morals, ſtands unparalleled and unrivalled by any philoſopher. And as it before appeared that Chriſtian morality excels philoſophy in the extent to which it applies the two precepts which diſſuade from doing injuries and from conceiving wicked purpoſes; ſo it is now manifeſt that the ground on which our Lord began the work of renovating manners was taken deeper, and was therefore more likely to influence future conduct, than any mode which philoſophers adopted: it is evident alſo, that the argument on which he enforced reformation of morals was more prevalent, becauſe more authoritative and more unmixed with doubt, than any inducements which philoſophers could preſume to hold out as conſequences that ſhould *moſt aſſuredly* follow, upon amendment of life. DISC. XIII.

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Forgiveneſs of injuries upon the principle of regarding all men as children of the ſame God, and on the perſuaſion that it is a condition of our obtaining pardon from God; repentance for ſins paſt; and the promiſe of pardon upon ſuch repentance; theſe doctrines, as they diſcriminate Chriſtianity from philoſophy, and exalt the one far above the other, ſo they could not be gathered from the writings of philoſophers, even though it had been *clear* that Chriſt *was* converſant with ſuch writings. But ſo far is that circumſtance from being *clear*, that no ſuppoſition can be more *improbable*. For in the firſt place, the obſcure condition in which he was born, would make it almoſt impoſſible that he ſhould receive an education ſo totally different from that of other Jews in Paleſtine, as would have been the ſtudy of Greek philoſophy added to that of the Scriptures. In the next place, the paucity of manuſcripts was ſuch as to make it highly improbable that many, if indeed any ſuch, ſhould come into the hands of one circumſtanced

ſtanced as he was, in rank not high, in poſſeſſions not affluent. Then again it muſt be recollected, that the Jews in Paleſtine held the Gentiles in ſuch contempt, that the circulation of their writings throughout Judea would not have been allowed. On theſe ſeveral accounts we may reaſonably conclude, that the writings of the Greek[85] philoſophers were totally unknown to Chriſt, and the very ſuppoſition that he might have ſtudied them muſt be abandoned as quite repugnant to probability, and almoſt irreconcileable with poſſibility. DISC. XIII.

And after all; however he might have gained information from the ſtudy of writings ſacred or profane with reſpect to morals, yet towards the invention of his parables, from neither could he have derived any other aſſiſtance than that he could have

[85] It were not only viſionary, but quite unneceſſary to conceive our Lord ſtudying the writings of Roman authors; becauſe their philoſophic maxims were copied from the ſchools of Greek philoſophy. Tully, who was the chief and beſt writer preceding the age of Chriſt, has nothing excellent which might not have been found in ſome of the Greek moraliſts, had their works come down to us entire.

DISC. XIII. found in them merely the *models* for such compoſitions; he could not thence have been furniſhed with ſubjects and ſentiments. The parables and allegories of the prophets and philoſophers are many of them very finely imagined; but excepting the parable ſpoken by Nathan, there is nothing of the kind in all antiquity to be compared[86] with the ſimple, yet affecting parables of the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Unmerciful Servant[87].

On the parables it is moreover to be obſerved, that imagination and adaptation of the ſimilitude to the ſubject are not the only circumſtances belonging to them: many of them are prophetic: which when we conſider, we muſt aſk, what writings could communicate to Chriſt the wiſdom of prophecy,

[86] See Dr. PALEY's Evidences, p. 135. vol. ii. ed. 1ſt.
"Neque hunc docendi morem uſurpare dedignatus eſt "Salvator noſter; dubium, ſapientiâ et gravitate, an "ſuavitate, elegantiâ, et παρυησιᾳ majore."
"De Sacrâ Poeſi Hebræorum," Præl. 10. Bp. LOWTH, p. 126. edit. 3.

[87] We ſhall in vain ſearch the treaſures of ancient and modern learning for apologues equal in beauty to our Lord's parables. NEWCOME, p. 89.

either

either as it appears more obſcurely in his parables, or more directly in his open and unreſerved predictions? To the imparting of ſuch wiſdom no writings are adequate. If as a moraliſt, and a teacher by parables he could have received but *little* aid from the ſtudy of ſacred or profane authors, as a prophet he could derive from them abſolutely *no* aſſiſtance whatever. Let us leave then the idea that his wiſdom might have been the reſult of application to writings, and let us ſee what can be done by ſuperior underſtanding. DISC. XIII.

In the hiſtory of mankind are recorded different æras, when the powers of the human mind have been diſplayed in a manner ſo ſignal, as to mark the periods, in which either ſome individual, or ſeveral contemporaries [88] of diſtinguiſhed abilities, enlightened the age which gave them exiſtence. Beams of genius, of invention, of knowledge, of art, of ſcience, have ſuddenly burſt out amidſt the clouds of intellectual

[88] See "Critical Reflections on Poetry and Painting," by Abbé du Bos, vol. ii. c. 13. refl. 3d.

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darkneſs, and have irradiated nations that for centuries had been obſcured by a long night of groſs ignorance. Reflection on this fact induces us to conceive, that the mind of man may be endowed with uncommon powers equal to the improvement of any and every ſyſtem of art or ſcience: and it muſt be allowed, that by the force of ſuperior underſtanding[99] Chriſt might have been enabled to teach his refined morals; as by creative imagination he might have invented thoſe parables which are not prophetic. But when we have made this conceſſion, it muſt on the other hand be granted, that with ſuch penetration and fancy he muſt have been a moſt extraordinary perſon in his intellectual faculties; for it is not in the uſual courſe of things, nor of daily occur-

[99] But as it may not exceed the powers of the human mind, eſpecially with the aſſiſtance of the Hebrew ſcriptures, to frame a rational ſyſtem of religion and morality, the very ſuperior excellence of what our Lord taught affords only a ſtrong preſumption, and not a deciſive proof, that he was an embaſſador of the Moſt High God.

Archbiſhop NEWCOME's "Obſervations on our Lord's "Conduct," ſect. 12. ch. 1. p. 59. edit. 1795.

rence,

rence, to meet with inſtances of ſuch moral wiſdom as appears in his precepts, or of ſuch ingenious[90] compoſition as is manifeſted in his parables. DISC. XIII.

Nor under this head are *extended* parables the only ſubjects that claim our attention. We ſhould not omit thoſe ſhorter illuſtrations, by which our Lord's diſcourſes are made engaging, lively, and impreſſive.

His Apoſtles, whoſe employment it would henceforth be to preach the Goſpel, he animates to rely on Divine Providence for ſeaſonable ſupply of food and raiment: "Behold the fowls of the air; for they ſow "not, neither do they reap, nor gather "into barns: yet your heavenly Father "feedeth them." "Conſider the lilies of "the field, how they grow: they toil not, "neither do they ſpin: and yet I ſay unto "you, that even Solomon, in all his glory, "was not arrayed like one of theſe[91]." As

[90] Section 5. of chapter ii. in Archbiſhop NEWCOME's "Obſervations" is particularly recommended to the reader's notice.

[91] St. Matt. vi. 26—28, 29.

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a caution to his diſciples againſt being deceived by falſe teachers, he ſuggeſts to them, "Ye ſhall know them by their fruits: do "men gather grapes of thorns? or figs of "thiſtles? Even ſo every good tree bring-"eth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree "bringeth forth evil fruit[92]." The diſtinction between one, who ſhould hear his doctrine to the ſalutary purpoſes of faith and amendment, and another on whom his exhortations would produce no ſuch permanent effect, is marked by likening the former "unto a wiſe man, who built his "houſe upon a rock;" the latter, "unto a "fooliſh man, who built his houſe upon "the ſand[93]." That the Jews had reſorted to John the Baptiſt in full perſuaſion and acknowledgement of his prophetic character, is intimated by theſe queſtions; "What went ye out into the wilderneſs to "ſee? a reed ſhaken with the wind? But "what went ye out for to ſee? a man "clothed in ſoft raiment[94]?" That acts of

[92] St. Matt. vii. 16, 17. [93] Ibid. vii. 24—26.
[94] Ibid. xi. 7, 8.

mercy

mercy and compaſſion on all days and ſeaſons may lawfully be exerciſed towards mankind, is to be inferred from theſe words; "What man ſhall there be among you, that "ſhall have one ſheep, and if it fall into a "pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not lay "hold on it, and lift it out[95]?" That the paternal love of God towards ſinful man, moved him to reclaim from wickedneſs thoſe that were gradually withdrawing themſelves to a wider diſtance from Divine favour, we may hence infer; "If a man have an hun-"dred ſheep, and one of them be gone "aſtray, doth he not leave the ninety and "nine, and goeth into the mountain, and "ſeeketh that which is gone aſtray[96]?" The ſemblance of holineſs, which the Scribes and Phariſees oſtentatiouſly aſſumed, whilſt their hearts little correſponded with their external profeſſion, made them "like unto "whited ſepulchres, which indeed appear "beautiful outward, but are within full of "dead men's bones, and of all unclean-

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[95] St. Matt. xii. 11.

[96] Ibid. xviii. 12.

"neſs."

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" nefs[97]." Anxious ſolicitude and tender affection cannot be expreſſed in ſtronger terms than in this pathetic exclamation: " O Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem! thou that killeſt " the prophets, and ſtoneſt them which are " ſent unto thee, how often would I have " gathered thy children together, even as " a hen gathereth her chickens under her " wings, and ye would not[98]!" The approaching end of Jeruſalem might be collected from certain ſigns, as the annual change of the ſeaſon from the appearance of a tree: " Learn the parable of the fig-tree: " when its branch is yet tender, and put- " teth forth leaves, ye know that ſummer " is nigh[99]." Perſeverance is inculcated in this ſhort aphoriſm: " No man having put " his hand to the plough, and looking " back, is fit for the kingdom of God[100]." The diſproportion of preachers, compared with the number of hearers, is expreſſed by " the harveſt truly is great, but the la-

[97] St. Matt. xxiii. 27.
[98] Ibid. xxiii. 37.
[99] Ibid. xxiv. 32.
[100] St. Luke, ix. 62.

" bourers

" bourers are few [101]." A pure heart is to our moral conduct, what perfect ſight is to our natural frame. The one prompts to virtuous actions; the other guides our ſteps in proper directions. This truth is conveyed in a manner peculiarly beautiful: " The light of the body is the eye: there- " fore when thine eye is ſingle, thy whole " body alſo is full of light: but when thine " eye is evil, thy body alſo is full of dark- " neſs. Take heed, therefore, that the " light which is in thee be not darkneſs [102]." Expoſed as they would be to violent perſecution, the diſciples, before they embraced the Goſpel, were required to conſider the degree of fortitude with which they could encounter dangers and difficulties. They were in this, as in common concerns of life, to act with due deliberation and forecaſt: " Which of you intending to build a tower, " ſitteth not down firſt, and counteth the " coſt, whether he have ſufficient to finiſh " it?" " Or what king going to make

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[101] St. Luke, x. 2. [102] Ibid. xi. 34, 35.

" war

DISC. XIII. "war againſt another king, ſitteth not down "firſt, and conſulteth whether he be able "with ten thouſand to meet him that "cometh againſt him with twenty thou-"ſand[103]." Chriſtianity is planted under Divine appointment, to the intent that all ſhould produce fruits of virtue and holineſs. To repreſent this purpoſe and effect of his religion, the expreſſion of our Lord is, "I "am the true vine, and my Father is the "huſbandman[104]." In the exerciſe and eſtabliſhing of real ſanctity, there is a ſpiritual union of deſign and co-operation, originating in God, promoted by Chriſt, and influencing the hearts of all thoſe who are devoted to the cauſe of Chriſtian faith and Chriſtian morals. This perfect concurrence of will and endeavour, our Lord intimates by ſaying of himſelf and his diſciples, "I am the vine; ye are the branches[105]." Not the Jews only, but the whole race of mankind, were objects of Chriſt's compaſ-

[103] St. Luke, xiv. 28—31. [104] St. John, xv. 1.
[105] Ibid. xv. 5.

ſion,

ſion, and were to receive benefits[106] from his death and paſſion. His concern for the ſalvation of *all* men he deſcribes, when he aſſerts of himſelf, "I am the good ſhep-herd; the good ſhepherd giveth his life for the ſheep." "Other ſheep I have, which are not of this fold: them alſo I muſt bring, and they ſhall hear my voice; and there ſhall be one fold, and one ſhepherd[107]." DISC. XIII.

On a review of theſe and other ſimilar illuſtrations, which were not ſtudied and occaſional, but unpremeditated and frequent; apart from all religious conſiderations, taſte and genius would demand it of any reader to confeſs honeſtly, that ſuch inſtances of fertile invention and pertinent application[108], ſo interwoven in familiar converſation

[106] See Dr. MACKNIGHT's Eſſay VII. ſect. 1. paragraph 5. "On the Mediation of Chriſt;" in his "New Tranſlation," vol. ii. p. 442. edit. with original text.

[107] St. John, x. 11—16.

[108] The illuſtrations of our Lord are ſingularly proper, not only as they illumine the immediate ſubject, but becauſe in general they are borrowed from circumſtances with which

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converſation as to make a principal and conſiderable part of it, muſt have proceeded from talents very ſeldom imparted to man.

But if it be evident that he was ſo extraordinary in mental endowments, one conſequence of great weight indiſputably follows;

which the Jews were converſant. "Præcipua erat omnibus occupatio in colendis terris et curando pecore; agricolarum et paſtorum fermè natio erat." "Itaque non mirum eſt ſi Hebræi ſcriptores multi ſunt in deducendis metaphoris ex his potiſſimum artibus, in quibus ferè nutriti et educati ſunt; ſi quæ animis oculiſque eorum maximè obverſarentur, ea derivarent in poeſin." Bp. LOWTH's Præl. 7. Change but the terms, and the words are applicable to the illuſtrations of our Lord, and the audience which heard them. "The diſcourſes, ſayings, and parables, even ſo late as in the Goſpels, are ſuited to ſuch a people, and abound with alluſions to huſbandry, and to the objects with which men are moſt acquainted in a country life." See Dr. JORTIN's Serm. IX. vol. v. p. 185, 186. ed. 1772. Concerning theſe, and other "Beauties which occur in our Lord's Diſcourſes," ſee part i. ch. ii. ſect. 5. of Archbiſhop NEWCOME's "Obſervations on our Lord's Conduct;" in which work, whoever contemplates the character of our Lord, will be reminded of CICERO's words; "Quòd ſi IPSAM HONESTATEM undique perfectam et abſolutam, rem unam præclariſſimam omnium maximèque laudandum, PENITUS VIDERENT, quonam gaudio complerentur!" CIC. de Fin. 5. 24. copied from PLATO's Phædrus.

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it is this; a perſon of underſtanding ſo very ſuperior to the generality of men, would never have expoſed himſelf to perſecution and death among his own countrymen, unleſs for the purpoſe of accompliſhing ſome great end that ſhould be adequate to the loſs of every earthly comfort, and even of life itſelf. It could not be reconciled even with common prudence, much leſs with uncommon abilities, to ſuppoſe that Chriſt would endure the bittereſt ſufferings for no other object than a popularity which could have been but of ſhort continuance, and which infallibly muſt have been forfeited immediately after his death, had his pretenſions been unfounded, and his predictions not true. To have thus acted, would not have been the conduct of a mind guided by the plaineſt ſenſe: ſurely then it could not have been the caſe with Chriſt, who is acknowledged to have been enlightened with ſuperior wiſdom. He, who was the [109] brighteſt ornament of philoſophy, was zealous in a DISC. XIII.

[109] SOCRATES.

cauſe

DISC. XIII. cauſe which he deemed of more importance than any concern in this world; namely, the introducing of good morals; and to this work he devoted his life. It is but fair then to allow, that Chriſt alſo muſt have had in view ſome cauſe, in which he was zealous, and which he thought more important than life, ſince to it he reſigned himſelf as a voluntary ſacrifice. If the one, as is never diſputed, died in teſtimony of morality, in candour it ſhould be indiſputable that the other alſo died in teſtimony of revealed truth. If credit for ſincerity be given the one, by parity of reaſon the ſame credit cannot be withholden from the other. The word of Chriſt then muſt be true: and that word declares "He came to give his life a "ranſom[110] for many;" and "that the "world[111] through him might be ſaved."

All however that has been ſaid on the capacity with which Chriſt might have been gifted as a mere man, can be applicable to him only as a teacher by moral precepts and

[110] St. Matt. xx. 28. [111] St. John, iii. 17.

parables *not* prophetic; it cannot apply to him when he *propheſies* either by parables, or by more direct predictions. No force of underſtanding, in mere man not endued with Divine preſcience, can ſo penetrate futurity, as to mark out diſtinctly, clearly, and circumſtantially, events, which at the time when the prophet is foretelling them do not appear likely to happen. But thus diſtinctly, clearly, and circumſtantially did Chriſt mark out events not probable to human conjecture; *viz.* his own crucifixion, and the deſtruction of Jeruſalem. We muſt therefore aſcribe that fore-knowledge to a higher cauſe than *human* underſtanding; even to Divine communication[112]; ſince that confeſſedly is the ſole cauſe competent to ſuch an effect, and the only ſource from which revelation of tranſactions inſcrutable by human ſagacity can poſſibly be derived. Chriſt then was enlightened by Divine inſpiration.

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Now, though to us who have ſeen the accompliſhment of his prophecies, inſpira-

[112] See NEWCOME's "Obſervations," p. 289. ed. 1795.

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tion does of itſelf afford a moſt convincing proof that Chriſt was ſent from God; yet the argument thence ariſing is irrefragably ſtrengthened by the additional conſideration of his miracles. Miracles, wrought for ſalutary purpoſes, entitle the worker of them to our confidence in his veracity. For, beneficial miracles cannot be worked without Divine co-operation[113]: and a holy God cannot co-operate in the effecting of miracles[114], to atteſt aſſertions not true. But the Scriptures declare, that for the relief of the diſtreſſed, and in confirmation of his veracity, Chriſt continually[115] performed

[113] "It is not conſiſtent with God's wiſdom or goodneſs, to be himſelf the inſtrument of confirming any falſe pretences to Divine authority and inſpiration." See "Vindication of the Chriſtian Religion," by SAMUEL CHANDLER, edit. 1725. p. 38. 64. 97.

[114] "The miracles wrought by the prophet ſhew that he is ſent from God: but God is a God of truth; and therefore the words ſpoken by his meſſenger, as ſuch, muſt be true." NEWCOME's "Obſervations," edit. 1795. p. 318.

[115] "Add to this, that they (i.e. the miracles) were as extraordinary for number, as they were in their own nature; and therefore manifeſted an abiding power in him that did them." S. CHANDLER, p. 131.

aſtoniſhing

aſtoniſhing miracles; and they affirm him to have been "approved of God, in the "wonders, and ſigns, which God did by "him[116]," and by which it was manifeſt that "God was with him[117]." When therefore Chriſt in expreſs terms tells us, that "he came to give his life a ranſom for "many," and "that the world through "him might be ſaved," we know from the nature of the Divine attributes that he ſpake truth: for had he not ſpoken truth, he had not been enabled to work the miracles which he evidently did perform. DISC. XIII.

But if inſpiration and miracles evince the truth of Chriſt as to the object of his miſſion, he muſt be true in all other reſpects; for Divine confirmation, like the power of ſuſpending the laws of nature, could be given to no one, who would ſpeak contrary to truth in any inſtance whatever[118]. True then is Chriſt when concerning himſelf he

[116] Acts, ii. 22. [117] Acts, x. 38.

[118] Cum divinæ juſtitiæ ac ſapientiæ adverſetur, tam excellenti modo eum ornare, qui falſum in re tantâ commiſiſſet. GROTIUS de Ver. Rel. Chriſt. 2. 7.

DISC. XIII. asserts, that "He had glory with the Father, before the world was[119];" that "He came down from Heaven[120];" and that "all power was given him in heaven "and in earth[121]."

That he made these declarations, we are assured by the same witnesses who heard his prophecies, and saw[122] his miracles. That their testimony is to be received we have no

[119] St. John, xvii. 5. [120] St. John, iii. 13.
[121] St. Matt. xxviii. 18.
[122] "No one proposition in nature is more evidently "true than this; that there was such a person as Jesus "Christ, who lived and died in *Judea*; and if we allow "this, we must farther acknowledge, that he led an "excellent life, and taught admirable lessons of morality; "and then we must also be forced to believe one step farther, "*viz.* that he did many wonderful works in confirmation of them; because we have no other evidence "for the truth of one than of the other." S. CHANDLER, p. 51. If we still proceed in the argument, we must admit, that our Lord made concerning himself those declarations which are ascribed to him: for we have the same evidence to prove that he made those declarations, as to prove that he wrought miracles, and that he lived in Judea. But the evidence in proof of all these points is so forcible and valid, that it is "the strongest evidence "for the truth of facts that ever was, or can be given to "the world." S. CHANDLER, p. 51.

doubt,

doubt, becauſe there could have exiſted no one inducement poſſible or conceivable for them to affirm theſe facts, if falſe; whereas there were many and weighty conſiderations, which might have influenced them either to deny or conceal the facts, though true. The witneſſes then we believe credible; we admit therefore their record of our Lord's declarations; and on the ground of his own words by them recorded, we worſhip the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to the glory of God[123] the Father, who ordained the diſpenſation of which Chriſt is the dignified and Divine Conductor; a diſpenſation of mercy and benevolence in God the Author, and in our Lord the Finiſher of our ſalvation. DISC. XIII.

From the remarks which have been offered to you, on the Preaching of Chriſt; from the enquiries which have been made concerning the ſource of his wiſdom; and from the conſequences which ariſe in the

[123] See Bp. SHERLOCK's vol. iv. Diſcourſe I. part iv. p. 66—69. edit. 1764.

DISC. XIII. inveſtigation of that ſubject; reſult theſe concluſions.

1. As a moral inſtructor, Chriſt diſplayed a mind endued with very extraordinary and ſuper-eminent powers.

2. As a prophet, he diſcovered the cleareſt indications of preſcience far exceeding all human foreſight.

3. As a worker of miracles, he gave ocular demonſtration of his poſſeſſing Divine energy.

If we conſider him in the firſt of theſe qualities; then, to imagine he would expoſe himſelf to a moſt painful death, for the ſake of eſtabliſhing an opinion not only untrue, but which in its falſehood muſt be liable to detection within the ſpace of three days, is in the higheſt degree *improbable*, according to all the knowledge we have of common prudence in human action.

But if we regard him with a view to his other properties; then, to ſuppoſe he ſhould claim to himſelf Divine honour without juſt pretenſions, and yet at the ſame time be ſignally marked out by the ALMIGHTY as a prophet

a prophet and a worker of beneficial mira- DISC. XIII.
cles, is *impoſſible*, according to whatever ideas we can form of God's attributes either from natural or revealed religion.

It remains, therefore, that we acknowledge and receive CHRIST, under the exalted characters, which upon the authority of his own works and words the Scriptures aſſign him. As ſuch, we do acknowledge and receive him. And remembering continually, that in the humiliation with which he left the glory of his Father and became man; in the wiſdom with which he taught; in the miracles which he performed; in all the perſecutions he experienced and the agonies he endured; in his death on the croſs; in his marvellous reſurrection; in his glorious aſcenſion; in his effuſion of ſpiritual gifts; remembering that in all theſe ſtupendous circumſtances, CHRIST was actuated by love for the human race and regard for the honour of GOD; was zealous that man ſhould be more happy and GOD more glorified; by admiration of wiſdom, benevolence, and goodneſs; by the ties of grati-

DISC. XIII. ude; by the duties of reverence; by the obligations of positive command; by the prospect of forming more virtuous habits in this life; by the hopes of attaining rational and spiritual happiness in a future state; impelled by all these motives we obey and worship CHRIST, as the SON of GOD, the Redeemer of man, the Saviour of the world, the LORD of all.

To HIM, with the FATHER, and the HOLY SPIRIT, by us who in obedience to our LORD's command were baptized in their name and dedicated to their service, be ascribed all praise and glory, might, majesty, and dominion, now and ever! Amen.

DISCOURSE XIV.

On the DUTY and ADVANTAGES of promoting the GLORY of GOD.

1 CORINTHIANS, x. 31.

Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatſoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

THE buſineſs of this diſcourſe ſhall be, firſt to prove that the actions of men may tend to the glory of their Creator: ſecondly, to ſhew by what actions we may promote that glory: and thirdly, to ſuggeſt ſome conſiderations, which may induce us to obſerve this duty. DISC. XIV.

So long as our faculties continue what they are, we can but argue according to human apprehenſions. If thoſe apprehenſions are as correct as our nature will admit,

DISC. XIV. mit, and the concluſions drawn from them are as juſt as our underſtanding can poſſibly deduce, we have then ſure grounds on which to form our opinions; indeed the very grounds on which Providence deſigned we ſhould eſtabliſh rules for our conduct, antecedently to revelation.

Now, according to the ſentiments of the wiſeſt men in every age, it is univerſally allowed, that of the various powers communicated to the ſeveral works of creation within the extent of our knowledge, reaſon is the moſt excellent [1]. From that portion of reaſon with which man is gifted, he derives many bleſſings, which no other ſpecies of living creatures inhabiting this world is either fitted to procure, or capable of enjoying. For, by the exerciſe of reaſon [2], he

[1] Solum eſt enim ex tot animantium generibus atque naturis, particeps rationis et cogitationis; cùm cætera ſint omnia expertia. Quid eſt autem, non dicam in homine, ſed in omni cœlo atque terrâ, ratione divinius?

Cic. de Leg. i. 7.

[2] See the Antigone of Sophocles, V. 332. Brunck's Ed. and Mr. Harris's Eulogy on Art, applied by Mr. Burgeſs in illuſtration of the Greek Chorus.

Burgess "On the Study of Antiquities," Ed. 2. p. 119.

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not only converts the fruits of the earth to his ſuſtenance; he not only ſatisfies his hunger with feeding on the cattle of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fiſh of the ſea; he not only ſubdues to his own purpoſes the ſtrongeſt, the ſwifteſt, the moſt ſagacious animals; but he alſo forms ſociety, invents arts, inſtitutes order, eſtabliſhes laws, and collects the fundamental truths and leading duties of religion. Hence man appears to have dominion over the land and waters; to be on this globe the chief work and head of God's creation; and more than all other beings, within the compaſs of our obſervation, to reſemble in his mental faculties that almighty and omniſcient Maker, after whoſe image in his rational and ſpiritual powers he is wonderfully formed. DISC. IV.

As reaſon is thus ſuperlatively excellent, it is the glory of man. And as it is the glory of man, to have endued him with it is, according to our conceptions, one ſource of glory to God: for every quality admirable in the effect brings honour on the cauſe which produced it, ſo far

DISC. XIV.

far as the effect is indebted to the cauſe for its perfection. Thus, the inſtrument, that by a ſkilful arrangement of parts completely anſwers the purpoſe for which it was deſigned, does credit to the artiſt who made it. The ſon, who by his knowledge and prudence gives evident proofs that he hath been well educated, occaſions men to commend his parents, who trained him up in a courſe of learning and wiſdom. Now as for the degree in which man ſtands indebted to God for his chief excellence, it is great indeed; for he could not in any manner have poſſeſſed that reaſon which is his ornament, unleſs God had imparted it to him. Therefore great glory muſt be given to God, for that which conſtitutes man's glory: and every act, by which man conſults the true dignity of his own nature, redounds ultimately to the praiſe of Him who endued him with the faculty whence his true dignity ariſes.

It appears then, that *all* acts, which dignify man as a rational being, may be regarded as tending to promote the glory of God: but thoſe acts more immediately produce

duce this effect, which have the glory of God intentionally and profeſſedly as the immediate object for which they are undertaken. Such, for inſtance, are, all national inſtitutions, domeſtic uſages, and prevailing cuſtoms, which originate in a deſign of maintaining amongſt mankind a general ſenſe, that the world was made and is governed by God, and that on his mercy we depend for our life, and for every bleſſing which life can afford. DISC. XIV.

Of ſuch national inſtitutions, public worſhip comes firſt to be conſidered. On this ſubject, the heart of every thinking man muſt dilate with pious fervour, and be filled with the grandeſt ideas, when he conceives the nations of the earth united in adoring their univerſal Father! Millions of beings, endued with intellect, and ſenſible of the goodneſs exerciſed towards them by Divine Benevolence, join with one conſent, and in a manner with one voice, in praiſing Him who is their Maker and Supporter, for the wonders He doeth towards the children of men! On ſuch a ſpectacle, immortal ſpirits muſt

DISC. XIV. must look down with admiration; on such an occasion the Lord of creation must peculiarly rejoice in his works! The best service humbly offered to Him from the noblest faculties communicated by Him, cannot be otherwise than acceptable to a God most perfect in every moral attribute. Moral virtues as they really *are*[3] the same in kind, though different in degree, both in man and God, so they must of necessity *appear* the same both to man and God. Gratitude is a duty of moral obligation so confessedly incumbent on man, that where it is wanting, he who fails in it is despised[4]; but where it is demonstrated, though by circumstances of return in themselves trifling, yet he who shews it is commendable, and

[3] Jam verò virtus eadem in homine ac Deo est; neque ullo alio ingenio præterea. Cic. de Leg. i. 8.

The moral perfections of all rational minds are *in* kind the same, however vastly they differ in degree.

Bp. SHERLOCK, V. iii. Disc. 13. p. 318. Ed. 1764.

[4] Quæ autem natio non comitatem, non benignitatem, non gratum animum, et beneficii memorem diligit? quæ superbos, quæ maleficos, quæ crudeles, quæ ingratos non aspernatur, non odit? Cic. de Leg. i. 11.

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the act itself is agreeable to the Benefactor who receives it. The Benefactor approves of it, not at all considering the means by which gratitude is testified, but on account of the *principle* whence it arises. Thus it is with man, who is a moral agent; and thus it is seen by God who made man such an agent, and who is himself the moral Governor of the universe. DISC. XIV.

Were man so competent to the supply of his wants that he could dispense with all assistance from his fellow-creatures, then as a solitary being he might be required to offer only solitary prayer. But as his nature is so constituted, that from the moment of his birth to the hour of his death he depends on others for help, in return for the enjoyment of social blessings, he is bound to join in acts of social religion. Has the infancy of any man been tenderly nurtured, and his youth directed to industrious employment by his parents? Is his labour encouraged by masters? Are his possessions secured and person defended by laws? The blessings he experiences are derived from society, and

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DISC. XIV. are imparted even to the loweſt order in every civil community well regulated. In addition to theſe bleſſings, which he enjoys in common with other members of the ſame ſociety, is any one either inſtructed in knowledge, or ſkilled in arts, and thence furniſhed with means to procure not only the neceſſaries, but alſo the conveniences of life? Theſe advantages he owes to the effect of ſocial inſtitutions, and to the operation of ſocial wants. Are any enriched with affluence, exalted in rank, and diſtinguiſhed with appellations of dignity? It is thus ſociety encourages exertions for public good, and provides for the ſupport of public order. Is the nation we inhabit favoured by Heaven as the ſeat of general plenty, freedom, juſtice, protection, happineſs? As members of the nation we partake of the national felicity. Though of the bleſſings thus mentioned, ſome are appropriated to particular ranks, yet many, and thoſe the moſt ſubſtantial, are communicated to all orders of men among us. Therefore on men of all deſcriptions, as they are rational beings made capable of gratitude,

titude, it is a duty incumbent that by public thankſgiving they ſhould ſhew their ſenſe of obligation to Almighty God, for public mercies already enjoyed; and by ſocial ſupplications ſhould pray for a continuance of thoſe divine favours, which can be received and experienced only in ſocial union. DISC. XIV.

Whatever conſiſts of various component parts, muſt neceſſarily partake of the qualities inherent in thoſe parts. The ſtream, that is formed by a conflux of many waters, is pure as the rivulets which flow into it are pure. The natural body, which is formed of divers members and organs, will be healthy in proportion as its members are ſound, and as its organs duly perform their functions. In like manner, religious aſſemblies, as they are aggregate bodies compoſed of families united, ſo they will diſcharge the duties of public worſhip more attentively and devoutly, as the ſeveral families come more prepared and impreſſed with a ſenſe of piety, through the habitual obſervance of domeſtic worſhip. Hence then domeſtic worſhip, as it conduces to the

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better performance of public prayer, promotes the glory of God. Nor is this the only inſtance in which domeſtic worſhip has ſo good a tendency. Domeſtic worſhip avails much towards conciliating harmony, preſerving regularity, and enſuring right conduct, in the reſpective members of every family in which it is practiſed. So far then as it leads to theſe happy conſequences, it conduces to make us live as becomes beings whom God hath bleſſed with reaſon, and who are bound to thank Him on account not only of public, but alſo of domeſtic mercies. For are health, competency, cheerfulneſs, inſtruction, and mutual eſteem, found in our families? Thoſe, who together ſhare theſe advantages, together ſhould magnify the name of Him, from whom theſe and all bleſſings originally proceed. The neceſſity of this duty is founded on common gratitude; and the utility of diſcharging it is obvious to the ſlighteſt reflection.

As public aſſemblies are compoſed of families, ſo families conſiſt of individuals: and the offices of domeſtic worſhip will more

more properly be performed, if the individuals in each houſe are habituated to private devotion. Thus then prayer in ſecret alſo tends to the glory of God, ſince it is ſubſervient to thoſe acts which are deſigned openly to exalt his holy name. And in its influence on our moral conduct, private prayer is more powerful than either domeſtic or public worſhip. For, as in retirement from all objects that engage the attention of the ſenſes, the ſoul is left free to carry on more immediate intercourſe with the Father of ſpirits; and as it may without reſtraint, though with all humility, there diſcloſe its inmoſt thoughts, and pour forth its ſupplications for help in the time of need; ſo the impreſſions made by frequent repetitions of theſe exerciſes, operate more ſtrongly on the mind, than any effects reſulting from other modes of worſhip; on the one hand checking our paſſions, on the other enforcing conformity to that reaſon, which when duly obeyed, redounds to the glory of God by whom it was beſtowed. DISC. XIV.

DISC. XIV. There are forms in common uſe, which as they are conducive towards maintaining a ſenſe of Divine Providence, ſo the obſervance of them is to the glory of God. Such, for inſtance, is the cuſtom of begging, in a few words, a benediction [5] on our food, and of returning thanks for the ſuſtenance afforded us; a cuſtom ſo agreeable with reaſon, that even in ages antecedent to civilization of manners, the heathens at their feaſts performed [6] a ceremony expreſſive of religious gratitude. Be it ſo, that on theſe

[5] Ὅτι γὰρ τοὺς ἄρτους εὐλογήσειν, ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ηὔξατο, παιδεύων τραπέζης μὴ πρότερον ἀπογεύεσθαι, ἕως ἂν εὐχαριστήσωμεν τῷ τῶν καρπῶν πεποιηκότι.

"When Chriſt bleſſed the loaves, he looked up to "heaven and prayed, teaching us to taſte of nothing on "our table till we have firſt of all given thanks to the "Author of all fruits." CHRYSOST. vol. vii. p. 691, C.

[6] Cæterum ſurgentes de mensâ, de poſtremo potu libabant diis in gratiarum actionem, fundentes vini meri paululum in menſam, vel in focum ardentem, qui hujus ſacri causâ aderat.

Nam ſemper et in omnibus, memoria numinis ob animum eſt habenda. En, antiquam pietatem gentium, non Judæorum: non capiebant cibum, niſi ante libaſſent diis. Dammii Lexcion V. Σπένδω.

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occaſions, as in other familiar uſages, there too often prevails a careleſs indifference: ſtill, however, the practice, though inattentively followed, is in itſelf laudable and in its conſequences ſalutary. For, he who habituates himſelf to this duty, profeſſes to the world that he lives not in a ſtate of inſenſibility to the God that ſupports him; and he induces mankind to place confidence in him, ſince he gives them a pledge that he is actuated by conſiderations of a higher nature, than regard merely to ſecondary and human cauſes. DISC. XIV.

Thus then the glory of God is more particularly promoted by all acts of religious ſervice, whether public or private, ſocial or retired.

Let us now conſider the motives that ſhould impel us to a conſcientious diſcharge of ſacred duties, by which God may be magnified.

Of all the Beings, which inhabit this earth, man only [1] is made capable of acknowledg-

[1] Itaque ex tot generibus nullum eſt animal præter hominem, quod habeat notitiam aliquam Dei.
Cic. de Leg. i. 8.

DISC. XIV.

ing the exiſtence of God, and of expreſſing gratitude for the goodneſs of his Creator. Wherefore is man thus diſtinguiſhed from brute animals? wherefore hath he underſtanding to diſcern, ſenſe to eſtimate, and language to recount the bleſſings that are poured on him by a God viſible in his works, though in other reſpects inviſible? Every act of that ſupreme intelligence, which reſides in God, muſt neceſſarily be towards ſome intentional end. As the external ſenſes and ſeveral members of the body are deſigned for the reſpective uſes, to which by inſtinct we apply them, ſo the internal capacities and diſpoſitions of the mind are aſſuredly imparted for the purpoſes, to which they have been employed by the generality of civilized men in all ages and nations. God worketh not in vain. If He hath fitted us with *ability* to be religious, indiſputably it is his will that we *ſhould* ſhew our reverence for Him, offer Him prayer, and render Him thanks; ſince theſe are the ſervices naturally reſulting from the powers with which we are endued,

dued. He then who neglects to expreſs his veneration, make his ſupplications, and declare his ſenſe of obligation to his Maker and Preſerver, preſumptuouſly refuſes compliance with the Divine will, a will manifeſted in the very conſtitution of the human mind. Whether ſuch reſiſtance to the deſign of our Creator can upon any principle of moral obligation be deemed a trivial offence, will be matter of doubt to thoſe only, who know nothing of God's beneficence, of Man's dependence, of the reciprocal return which is univerſally expected from him who receives, to him who has conferred invaluable bleſſings. DISC. XIV.

But leaving arguments deduced from reaſon, let us come to points of utility ariſing from the punctual diſcharge of religious duties.

To our country, the preſerving of Faith in God by devotional acts is highly beneficial, as it both lays and ſecures the deepeſt foundation for public virtue. To our families, it is of moſt happy conſequence, as it trains up children in temperance, affection, and rectitude; and influences domeſtics to behave

DISC. XIV. with induſtry, civility, and honeſty. On ourſelves it operates with ſalutary force, as it ſtrengthens our reſolutions to conduct ourſelves in all caſes as becomes the ſons of God. Take the reverſe, and mark the effects which proceed from diſregard to religious duties. Where Religion is neglected, principles of morality become gradually looſe, and at length give way to univerſal profligacy [8]. General corruption of morals has a natural tendency to create contempt of laws; and thence flow diſorderly interruptions of the public peace, and inſecurity both to perſon and property. An irreligious magiſtrate will have diſſolute ſubjects [9]: an irreligious parent muſt not be ſurpriſed that his children prove diſobedient, unkind, and vicious: an irreligious maſter

[8] Forgetfulneſs or denial of God, his providence, and judgments to come, undermines all ſteady foundations of probity and fidelity, by which any nation muſt ſtand; rendering without force and abſolutely null, all the laws, that can be made by your's, or any other human authority. Bp. HOOPER's Sixth Sermon, p. 664.

[9] Multitudinem, quæ ſemper fermè regenti ſimilis eſt. LIV. v. 28.

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is taking the moſt effectual method to ruin the qualities that are of the higheſt value, when found in domeſtics. Say then; do not love for our country, love for our families, and ſelf-regard, combine in recommending to us, (as we value our nation, our kindred, ourſelves,) a due attention to religion? And ſhall we be ſo dead either to public ſpirit, or to parental feelings, or to common concern for our own intereſt, as not to obey the preſſing call which invites us to the performance of its duties? If any man profeſs genuine Patriotiſm, ſincere attachment to thoſe about him, and prudent anxiety for his own welfare, let him ſhew himſelf in earneſt by a line of religious behaviour, that will be the ſource of moral virtue, and the occaſion of temporal no leſs than of eternal happineſs, to all that he holds dear as a member of community, a parent, a maſter, a man! DISC. XIV.

Nor in acts of private devotion only let him reſt ſatisfied. The glory of God ſhould be promoted in a manner pub-

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DISC. XIV. lic[*] as are the mercies He confers. The Sabbath claims the attention of every rational man, for it is then the glory of God is the direct object for which religious ſocieties aſſemble.

Nor is attendance at public worſhip the *whole* that is claimed on the Sabbath, in countries where with a view to the glory of God, an intermiſſion of ordinary amuſements is on that day eſtabliſhed; eſtabliſhed in piety towards Him, "in whoſe "hands are all our times," and in great, very great wiſdom, for the purpoſe of invigorating the moral ſenſe, and of renovating the mind in habits of goodneſs. In this our own enlightened nation, it behoves us, at leaſt on one day in ſeven, to relinquiſh ſome portion of our common purſuits, and ſacrifice

[*] To be of no church (ſays Dr. JOHNSON) is dangerous. Religion, of which the rewards are diſtant, and which is animated only by faith and hope, will glide by degrees out of the mind, unleſs it be invigorated and reimpreſſed by external ordinances, by ſtated calls to worſhip, and the ſalutary influence of example.

Life of MILTON.

them

them to engagements of a more ſober and ſerious kind; engagements, calculated for raiſing the ſoul to contemplation of the Deity, and for diffuſing a ſenſe of piety and virtue throughout the kingdom. He that *will* deny himſelf his uſual gratifications, on days ſet apart for religious worſhip, though he doth it only for the ſake of faſhion, yet he deſerves at leaſt the commendation of being prudently decorous. Or if he is prompted by humanity to exempt from labour his "man ſervant, his maid ſervant, "his cattle," and beaſt of burden on the ſeventh" day; he is to be eſteemed as DISC. XIV.

" The Moſaic law, which enjoined reſt on the SEVENTH day, among other conſiderations had regard to ſervants; and intended to protect them againſt the ſeverity of their maſters, who allowed them no reſpite from their labour. See GROTIUS on "The Truth of the Chriſtian Religion," B. 5. 10. If there are *now* any, who exact the labour of MORE than SIX days, and who either legally, or even practically, deny the lower orders of ſociety reſt on every SEVENTH day; they would do well to conſider if it be not an act of oppreſſion towards the moſt laborious part of mankind, even to fix the days for their repoſe at a diſtance WIDER than the SEVENTH; much more ſo then, not to grant them repoſe on any days whatever.

DISC. XIV. merciful and benevolent. But if, as much as is poſſible and compatible with his ſituation, he either declines the avocations of his daily buſineſs, or foregoes the enjoyment of his familiar pleaſures; and in either or both caſes acts with the intention of impreſſing on the hearts of others a reverence for Almighty God; with the view of leaving them leiſure for conſideration of moral and religious truths; and in the hope of thus diſſeminating right principles of action among the maſs of the people; he then merits the praiſe of being a conſcientious man.

Nor let ceſſation from ordinary amuſements on the Sabbath day either be ridiculed by levity as ſcrupulous weakneſs, or reproached by indifference as but uſeleſs *form*. Form indeed it is; but let the ſhallow reaſoner be taught to know that human life *is* made up of *forms*; and if *forms* will lead to ſubſtantial goodneſs, they are of importance; and he that obſerves them is inſtrumental to the effects ariſing from ſuch obſervance. There are things innumerable, which are indifferent in themſelves and taken abſtractedly,

ſtractedly, but which are altered in their nature by contingent circumſtances. Thus, ſounds of muſic conſidered apart from any ideas annexed to them, muſt be all alike innocent on all days indiſcriminately. But if to certain ſounds be annexed certain ideas not ſuitable with the place or time in which they are introduced, then on account of the aſſociated ideas the ſounds themſelves become improper on that particular occaſion. And the introduction of them will become abſolutely criminal, if it proceeds from a deſign to inſult the ſanctity of a ſeaſon dedicated to the God of the univerſe. On the other hand there may to certain ſounds be annexed certain ideas that correſpond with the ſpirit either of cheerful or ſerious devotion: in which caſe, for the ſake of the ideas connected with them, the ſounds themſelves are not only allowable, but peculiarly fit, on the Sabbath day. To various modes of public and private diverſion, ſimilar obſervations may be extended. In themſelves they may be innocent; but on account of their unſuitableneſs with the intent of the Sabbath, and of their power to turn the

DISC. XIV.

DISC. XIV. mind from reflections on God and on its own progreſs in moral improvements, they are culpable, becauſe poſitively injurious to the piety and virtue of ſociety. But if the purſuit of engagements, that may be the occaſion of increaſing indifference to religion and of corrupting manners, be cenſurable and criminal; the preſcribing of a rule to himſelf by which he will exclude occupations, that in their conſequences may weaken the grounds of piety and looſen the ties of morality among the members of his community, is in any perſon an act of real virtue; and the commendable motive which induces him to lay on himſelf this reſtraint, entitles him to praiſe for his exemplary conduct and good purpoſe.

The recollection of every one will readily call to his mind the ſeveral local practices, which, in the reſpective places where they prevail, are adopted with the intent of expreſſing reverence for the day appropriated to religious worſhip. Whether it be the wearing of a better garment; or not travelling, except in caſes of neceſſity, without having previouſly attended Divine ſervice,

or

or designing to attend it at the journey's end; whether it be these or other usages, which to the superficial observer may appear unimportant; still, as in these and similar modes of distinguishing the Sabbath, much more is meant than meets the eye; and as the customs are instituted to promote an end of the highest concern; the continuance of them is an object worthy the attention of every person, who rightly estimates the consequence of actions. The practices themselves are indeed little things; but nothing little, the termination of which is ultimately momentous, will be deemed too trivial for the notice of him who knows what prodigious effects arise from the most minute causes. "All things are lawful, "but all things are not expedient[12]," is a maxim widely extensive in comprehension, and to nothing more applicable than to the manner in which the Sabbath should be spent. Not only that which is harmless merely in itself, but that also which through the force of example cannot lead others to

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[12] 1 Cor. vi. 12.

harm

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harm by encouraging vice and irreligion, ſhould be our aim and rule of conduct; on all days indeed if it were poſſible, but on the Sabbath principally and particularly: for it is the day dedicated to God and virtue. And if there be a God, of infinite goodneſs, mercy, and power, by whom we were created and by whom we exiſt; if there be in virtue any beauty, excellence, and utility; if man be the beſt work of God's creation upon earth; if reaſon be juſtly the pride of man; if we feel as men of affectionate diſpoſitions for our kindred; as men of benevolence for all the members who live in the ſame ſtate with us; as men of public principle concerned for the true welfare, the permanent ſtability, and the national honour of our country; let us, let us not depart from the wiſdom of our anceſtors by diminiſhing the ſanctity of ſuch a day, a day that hath God's glory indeed for its firſt object, but human happineſs for its infallible conſequence.

APPENDIX.

NOTES AND EXTRACTS.

Page 30, Line 3.

THIS creative power in the Son the Scriptures aſſert in the moſt expreſs terms.

See Dr. MACKNIGHT on Eph. iii. 9. "Here "the context leads us, *by the creation of all* "*things*, to underſtand the formation of all the "diſpenſations of religion by Chriſt. CHAND-"LER, however, is of opinion, that the creation "of the heavens and the earth is included in "the general expreſſion *all things*; and that it "adds dignity to the ſentiment, as it repreſents "our Saviour as the author of Natural and "Moral Creation, under the direction, and by "the power of God his Father. The parallel "paſſage, Col. i. 16. confirms this opinion."

Dr. MACKNIGHT remarks, on Col. i. 16, "*Things viſible*, are thoſe ſaid in the forego-

" ing clauſe to be *upon the earth;* the mate-
" rial fabric, with all its inhabitants, called,
" Heb. xi. 3. τα βλεπομενα, *things which are ſeen.*
" *Things inviſible*, are thoſe ſaid to be *in the*
" *heavens*; namely, the different orders of an-
" gels, good and bad; called in the following
" part of the verſe *thrones*, *lordſhips*, &c.—
" Becauſe, in after-times, falſe teachers would
" ariſe and affirm, ſome that the world was
" made by angels; others, that it was made
" by an evil principle; the Apoſtle may have
" been directed by the Spirit to declare, in the
" moſt expreſs manner, that all things were
" created by God's beloved Son, that the ſin-
" cere might be preſerved from thoſe pernicious
" errors."

P. 32. l. 5. *He ſaw through faith the coming of Chriſt.*"

The ſame may be affirmed not of Abraham only, but of devout Jews in general, according to Dr. MACKNIGHT's acceptation of προηλπικοτας, Eph. i. 12, " who *before hoped* in *the*
" Chriſt." Which interpretation he confirms by CHANDLER's note on this paſſage: " This
" is a proper characteriſtic, or diſtinguiſhing
" mark of the Jews. They had the promiſe

" of

" of the Meſſiah or Chriſt, and therefore hoped " in him before the time of his actual appear- " ance. Thus we find it was the common cha- " racter of the devout Jews, that they *waited* " *for the conſolation of Iſrael*, Luke, ii. 25. and " that they looked for redemption in Jeruſa- " lem," v. 38. " that is, they hoped in the " Meſſiah before the time of his appearance."

P. 41. l. 19. CHRIST, *who is over all*, GOD *bleſſed for ever.*

For St. Paul's opinion reſpecting the divinity of CHRIST, we may confidently appeal to this Text. The conjecture of SCHLICHTING and CRELL is ſupported by no MS. The common reading of the original is not only defended by all that was remarked by MILL, and collected by WOLFIUS; but it is alſo retained by WETSTEIN and GRIESBACH, and approved by MICHAELIS.

See MARSH's Tranſlation of MICHAELIS's Introduction, &c. vol. ii. ch. x. § i. p. 387. § v. p. 417. ch. xii. § i. p. 471. ed. 1793.

P. 66. l. 6. *Whence came Man?*

According to the allowed axiom, " Cauſas " rerum naturalium non plures admitti debere,

" quam quæ et veræ ſunt et *earum phænomenis* " *explicândis ſufficiant*," (See lib. iii. NEWTONI Princip. Math.) moſt ſtrictly philoſophical is the Moſaic account of the origin whence the whole human ſpecies is derived. For the cauſes of the varieties in the race of man, which now appear, ſee Chapter vi. Sect. 3. " Obſervations " made during a Voyage round the World," by JOHN REINOLD FORSTER.

P. 186. l. 1. *They haſten to ſee any diſplay either of ſkill or agility, though extremely perilous*, &c. &c.

TACITUS remarks on the ancient Germans; " Genus ſpectaculorum unum, atque in omni " cœtu idem. Nudi juvenes, quibus id ludi- " crum eſt, inter gladios ſe, atque infeſtas " frameas, ſaltu jaciunt. Exercitatio artem " paravit, ars decorem: non in quæſtum ta- " men, aut mercedem: quamvis audacis laſ- " civiæ pretium eſt, voluptas ſpectantium."

TACITI Germania, § 24.

P. 186. l. 6. *The inhabitants are addicted to games of chance.*

" Aleam (quod mirere) ſobrii inter ſeria ex- " ercent, tantâ lucrandi perdendive temeritate, " ut,

" ut, cùm omnia defecerunt, extremo ac noviſ-
" ſimo jactu de libertate et de corpore con-
" tendant. Victus voluntariam ſervitutem adit:
" quamvis junior, quamvis robuſtior, alligari
" ſe ac venire patitur. Ea eſt in re pravâ per-
" vicacia: ipſi fidem vocant."

TACITI German. § 24.

It is ſingular that obligations thus contracted ſhould, above all others, have been conſidered as debts of honour, even from ſo remote antiquity.

The ſame paſſion for gaming was found among the native inhabitants of South America.

" An immoderate love of play, eſpecially
" at games of hazard, which ſeems to be
" natural to all people unaccuſtomed to the
" occupations of regular induſtry, is likewiſe
" univerſal among the Americans. The ſame
" cauſes, which ſo often prompt perſons at
" their eaſe in civilized life to have recourſe to
" this paſtime, render it the delight of the
" ſavage. The former are independent of la-
" bour; the latter do not feel the neceſſity of
" it; and as both are unemployed, they run
" with tranſport to whatever is of power to ſtir

" and agitate their minds. Hence the Ameri-
" cans, who at other times are ſo indifferent,
" ſo phlegmatic, ſo ſilent, and ſo diſintereſted,
" as ſoon as they engage in play become rapa-
" cious, impatient, noiſy, and almoſt frantic
" with eagerneſs. Their furs, their domeſtic
" utenſils, their clothes, their arms, are ſtaked
" at the gaming-table; and when all is loſt,
" high as their ſenſe of independence is, in a
" wild emotion of deſpair or of hope, *they will*
" often riſk their perſonal liberty, upon a ſingle
" caſt."

Dr. ROBERTSON's " Hiſtory of America," b. iv. p. 395. edit. 4to. 1777.

In the philoſophical parts of this paragraph, Dr. ROBERTSON was long ſince anticipated by the penetrating Abbé DU BOS. See his " Cri-
" tical Reflections on Poetry," part i. c. 2.

P. 228. l. 3. *It is contrary*, &c.

Si quis allatis hactenùs argumentis pro Chriſtianâ Religione ſatis ſibi factum non putet, ſed magis urgentia deſideret; ſcire debet, pro rerum diverſitate, diverſa quoque eſſe probandi genera; alia in mathematicis, alia de affectionibus corporum, alia circa deliberationes, alia ubi

ubi FACTI EST QUÆSTIO; in quo genere ſane ſtandum eſt nullâ ſuſpicione laborantibus teſtimoniis.

GROTIUS de Ver. l. ii. 19.

P. 232. l. 14. *Teſtimonies from the age immediately ſubſequent to them.*

Juſtin Martyr, A. D. CL. mentions the Goſpels as univerſally received and read in the congregations, in his time. He muſt have converſed with Chriſtians, who were old men, and from them have learned that the Goſpels were extant when they were young.—And his citations from the four Goſpels, from the Epiſtles of St. Paul, and from the Revelation, ſhew to a demonſtration that he had them as we now have them, in the main.

In the interval between A. D. LXX. and Juſtin, are the authors called Apoſtolical, as *Clemens*, *Hermas*, *Barnabas*, *Ignatius*. Theſe authors make uſe of ſome of the Goſpels and Epiſtles, and allude to them; which makes them highly valuable, and ſerviceable to the Chriſtian cauſe.

Dr. JORTIN's "Remarks on Eccleſiaſtical "Hiſtory," vol. i. p. 51.

Polycarp, in his Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, ſuppoſed to be written about A. D. CVII. has paſſages and expreſſions from *Matthew*, *Luke*, the Acts, St. Paul's Epiſtles to the Philippians, Epheſians, Galatians, Corinthians, Romans, Theſſalonians, Coloſſians, 1 Timothy, 1 Ep. of John, and 1 of Peter, and makes particular mention of St. Paul's Epiſtle to the Epheſians.

Dr. JORTIN's "Remarks on Eccleſiaſtical "Hiſtory," vol. i. p. 68.

For an account of Irenæus, Athenagoras, Theophilus, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Tertullian, ſee MOSHEIM's "Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory," part ii. ch. 2. Cent. ii.

BRYANT, in his "Treatiſe upon the Authen-"ticity of the Scriptures," remarks on Celſus, who lived in the time of Adrian, *i. e.* in the ſecond Century; that "many of the principal "paſſages in the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles, as "well as in the Old Teſtament, are either "quoted, or alluded to, by him."

P. 288. *On ſome principal Virtues in the Character of* St. PAUL.

See the MELETEMATA of WITSIUS.

Quid cæteras Pauli virtutes memorem? profundam illam *Humilitatem*, quâ ſe aliorum pedibus

bus lubens ſubmiſit omnium ſe peccatorum maximum, omnium ſanctorum ἐλαχιστότερον, *minimo minorem*, ſponte profeſſus: ſublimem illam *magnanimitatem*, quâ calcatis omnibus ſeculi illecebris, omnibus carnis commoditatibus, omnibus ſæviſſimarum mortium terriculamentis, non niſi ſpiritualia ac cœleſtia cogitabat, loquebatur, et ſectabatur ſuper omnia: illum *zelum*, quo totus ad Dei gloriam hominumque ſalutem flagrabat: illam *charitatem* prorsùs incredibilem, quâ paratus erat, ſi quidem fieri poſſet, anathema eſſe a Chriſto pro Judæis, fratribus ſuis ſecundum carnem: illam in obeundo munere *diligentiam*, nullis fractam laboribus: illam *conſtantiam* planè invictam, ſub nullis fatiſcentem periculis, opprobriis, cruciatibus: *prudentiam* illam prope divinam, quâ ſingula rerum, hominum, temporum momenta proſpicientèr expendens, quid, ubi, quando, quomodo agendum eſſet, ſapientiſſimè diſcernebat: *ſanctitatem* denique exactiſſimam, quâ ipſum, quantum pote, Chriſtum referens et exprimens, toti ſe Eccleſiæ exemplum præſtitit. Quid *liberalitatem* laudem, curamque pauperum, quorum ſublevandorum gratiâ tam longinqua et moleſta aliquoties ſuſcepit itinera? quid *ſobrietatem* et parſimoniam, per quam factum eſt ut ſolo victu et amictu contentus, non modò nihil opulentum

in

in vitâ expetierit, ſed ſemper in re tenui a licitis etiam abſtinuerit?

De Vitâ Pauli, § 13. c. 8. p. 226. ed. 1717.

P. 299. l. 2. *Journeyings widely extended*, &c.

Ad hiſtoriam Pauli pertinet id quod de ſuâ infatigabili diligentiâ in Evangelii prædicatione, nullâ equidem jactantiâ, ſed ſolâ veritatis conſcientiâ, ad Dei gloriam, narrat Rom. 15. 19. *ſe ab Hieroſolyma* καὶ κυκλῳ *et circumjacentibus regionibus, ad Illyricum uſque Evangelium Chriſti impleviſſe.*

Omnia Pauli itinera, quæ in hoc uſque tempus fecit, ſimul mente complectenda ſunt, ut juſtam ingentis illius tractûs ideam formemus. Neque pigebit cuncta in compendium redacta uno veluti obtutu contemplanda præbere. Initium prædicationis Paulinæ a *Damaſco* eſt. Inde in Arabiam profectus, ibique triennium commoratus, *Damaſcum* rediit, mox *Hieroſolymam* iturus. Hieroſolymâ *Cæſaream* profectus eſt; hinc *Tarſum* patriam ſuam: unde a Barnabâ *Antiochiam* accitus eſt. Quocum iterum *Hieroſolymam* tetendit, ſublevandæ neceſſitati pauperum. Hieroſolymâ *Antiochiam* regreſſi, inde *Seleuciam* adiverunt; mox *Cyprum*, et *Pamphyliæ* civitates quaſdam, et *Antiochiam Piſidiæ* ab illâ Syriæ diverſam, denique

denique *Lycaoniam;* inde *Antiochiam* reverſuri, unde fuerant commendati gratiæ Dei ad opus quod impleverant. Antiochiâ iterum *Hieroſolymam* miſſi ſunt, Apoſtolos et Preſbyteros illius Eccleſiæ conſulturi ſuper neceſſitate circumciſionis cæterorumque rituum Moſaicorum: quo officio defuncti *Antiochiam* unà cum decreto Apoſtolico redierunt. Dehinc *Phrygiam, Galatiam, Myſiam,* peragravit Paulus, donec *Troadæ* pervenit; unde cœleſti viſione in *Macedoniam* accitus *Europam* intravit, et itinere facto per *Amphipolim* et *Apolloniam,* ad mare Illyricum ſitam, uti ex GROTIO nuper obſervavimus, *Philippos* et *Theſſalonicam,* Macedoniæ urbes, venit. Inde *Epheſum;* quo viſitatis *Galatiæ* et *Phrygiæ* Eccleſiis, non multo poſt rediit. Epheſo per tumultum Demetrii, pulſus in *Macedoniam* et *Græciam* ivit, ibi dum tres menſes peragit, hanc ad Romanos epiſtolam ſcripſit.

De Vitâ Pauli, § 9. c. 14. p. 148.

P. 308. l. 11. *In his enlarged view of the Chriſtian Covenant,* &c.

Gal. ii. 14. Non licet ex hâc hiſtoriæ ſacræ parte concludere *errorem* in *fide* in alterutro Apoſtolorum, vel diſſenſum in doctrinâ inter utrumque. Indubium enim eſt, quod doctrinam attinet, Petrum

Petrum in hoc negotio ejuſdem ſententiæ fuiſſe cum Paulo: fas ſcilicet homini Judæo eſſe familiaritatem colere cum Gentilibus fide Chriſtianâ præditis. Sic ipſe edoctus erat oraculo, Act. x. 19, 20. Sic docuerat Hieroſolymitanos, Act. xi. 12—17. Sic comprobaverat ſuâ praxi, Gal. ii. 12. Non fuit ergo *error in dogmate*. Omnis perplexitas Petri fuit circa facti *circumſtantias*, ubi ſuum prudentiæ moderamen eſt. Ea docet, omnibus omnia fieri, etiam infirmis veluti *infirmum*. 1 Cor. ix. 20, 22. Id exiſtimabat Petrus hic habere locum, ne offenderet circumciſos, quorum præcipuè erat Apoſtolus. Paulus autem perſpicaciùs et veriùs arbitrabatur, ex intempeſtivâ hâc accommodatione plus ſcandali naſci, et de Chriſtianâ libertate ultra quàm par eſt delibari: nam et Judæos confirmari in ſuâ, injuſtâ ſane, adverſus Gentiles duritie; et Gentilium fidelium animos præter rationem turbari, quaſi non æquam cum Judæis credentibus in Chriſti juſtitiâ ac Dei favore partem haberent. Tota ergo hæc controverſia fuit, non de *doctrinâ* libertatis Chriſtianæ, ſed de illius *uſu*, *hìc* et *nunc*: in quâ re Paulus prudentiæ regulas meliùs perſpectas habuit quàm Petrus.

De Vitâ Pauli, § 4. c. 13. p. 65. WITSIUS.

That

That in his ſentiments reſpecting the fundamental articles of Chriſtianity, St. Peter is on all occaſions conſiſtent with himſelf, will appear upon examining the ſeveral paſſages in which thoſe ſentiments are clearly delivered.

1.—In Acts, i. 22. St. Peter ſhews the neceſſity of ordaining one, who ſhould be a witneſs of Chriſt's reſurrection.

2.—Acts, ii. 22—36. He inſiſts on the reſurrection and exaltation of our Lord; and in ver. 38. exhorts the Jews to be baptized "in the "name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the remiſſion of ſins;" aſſuring them that they ſhall then receive the influence of the Holy Spirit: "for the promiſe is "unto you, and to your children, and to all "that are afar off, even as many as the Lord "ſhall call."

3.—Acts, iii. 12—29. He ſets forth that God had "glorified his ſon Jeſus," whom he ſtyles the "Holy One, the Juſt, the Prince of Life." He inculcates repentance; converſion; and faith in Chriſt, as the Prophet foretold by Moſes, as the Seed promiſed to Abraham, as the Son of God raiſed up and ſent to bleſs the Jews firſt, "by turning away every one of "them from their iniquities."

4.—Acts, iv. 8—12. With firm intrepidity he maintains before the Jewiſh rulers the reſurrection

rection and dignity of our Lord, and boldly adds, "there is none other name under heaven "given among men, whereby we must be "saved."

5.—Acts, v. 27—30. In the prayer, which St. Peter and St. John offered up unto God, Jesus is twice called the Holy Son of God.

6.—Acts v. 29—32. He declares, that from a principle of obedience to God, he is bound to preach in Jerusalem, that God "raised up "Jesus," and "exalted him to be a Prince and "a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, "and forgiveness of sins."

7.—Acts, x. 36—43. He briefly intimates the nature of Christ's Ministry upon Earth; asserts his Resurrection; proclaims Him "Lord of "all;" and declares the commission given himself and the other Apostles, "to preach unto the "people, and to testify that it is He which was "ordained of God to be the Judge of quick "and dead. To Him give all the prophets "witness, that through His name, whosoever "believeth in Him, shall receive remission of "sins."

8.—Acts, xv. 7—11. On the question which arose respecting the necessity of enforcing the observance of Mosaic ordinances on Gentile converts,

converts, in terms remarkably ſtrong he expreſſes his utter diſapprobation of ſuch doctrine: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a "yoke upon the neck of the diſciples, which "neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? "But we believe that through the Grace of the "Lord Jeſus Chriſt, (q. d. and not by ritual "works of the Moſaic Law,) *we* ſhall be ſaved, "as they."

9.—In his firſt Epiſtle, i. 3. he thus comforts the diſperſed converts: "Bleſſed be the God and "Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which, ac-"cording to his abundant mercy, hath begotten "us again unto a lively hope, by the reſurrec-"tion of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead."

10.—In v. 16, he exhorts them to holineſs; and in v. 18, ſuggeſts to their minds the ineſtimable price of the redemption purchaſed for them: "Foraſmuch as ye know that ye were not "redeemed with corruptible things, as ſilver "and gold, from your vain converſation re-"ceived by tradition from your fathers: but "with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a "lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot: who "verily was fore-ordained before the foundation "of the world, but was manifeſt in theſe laſt "times for you, who by Him do believe in

" God that raiſed Him up from the dead and " and gave Him glory, that your faith and hope " might be in God."

11.—1 Ep. ii. 3—8. He recommends to the converts mutual charity, by repreſenting them as formed into one body, united together in the ſimilitude of a temple, the foundation and " chief corner-ſtone" of which is Chriſt; and " he that believeth in Him ſhall not be con- " founded."

12.—1 Ep. ii. 18—24. He encourages domeſtic ſervants to be patient under ſufferings, by ſetting before them the example of Chriſt, " who " his own ſelf bare our ſins in his own body " on the tree, that we being dead to ſin ſhould " live unto righteouſneſs: by whoſe ſtripes ye " were healed."

13.—1 Ep. iii. 16—22. That amidſt their moſt difficult trials the converts ſhould ſo act as to preſerve a good conſcience; St. Peter tells them, " it is better, if the will of God be ſo, that ye " ſuffer for well-doing than for evil-doing;" and reminds them that " Chriſt alſo once ſuf- " fered for ſins, the juſt for the unjuſt, that he " might bring us to God, being put to death " in the fleſh, but quickened by the Spirit:" and he animates them to perſeverance in a courſe

courſe of innocency, notwithſtanding the calamities of perſecution, by pointing out the confident aſſurance with which they might expect the recompence of future happineſs, "by the "reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, who is gone into "heaven, and is on the right hand of God, "angels, and authorities, and powers, being "made ſubject unto Him."

14.—1 Ep. i. 2 and 22. To the Holy Spirit the Apoſtle aſcribes it, that the converts are become obedient to the Goſpel.

There prevails throughout theſe paſſages the moſt uniform conſiſtency. Nor is this the only circumſtance here to be obſerved. Between them and the doctrines of St. Paul there is moreover the moſt perfect agreement. In proof of which aſſertion, let us refer to ſome, and tranſcribe other Texts, arranging them in paragraphs correſponding with thoſe that precede, according to the figures reſpectively prefixed to each.

2, 3.—In Acts, xiii. 23—39. the topics of St. Paul's Diſcourſe at Antioch in Piſidia are ſimilar to thoſe, which St. Peter uſed at Jeruſalem. Acts, ii. 22—36. iii. 12—29. Each alludes to the caſe and words of David.

Acts, xxvi. 22, 23. St. Paul thus defends himſelf before Agrippa:

" Having therefore obtained help of God, I " continue unto this day, witneſſing both to " ſmall and great, ſaying none other things " than thoſe, which the prophets and Moſes " did ſay ſhould come; ' That Chriſt ſhould " ſuffer, and that He ſhould be the firſt that " ſhould riſe from the dead, and ſhould ſhew " light unto the People, and to the Gentiles."

To the Corinthians he writes; 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. " For I delivered unto you *firſt* of all " that which I alſo received, how that Chriſt " died for our ſins, according to the Scriptures: " and that he was buried, and that he roſe " again the third day, according to the Scrip- " tures."

6.—Acts, xx. 24. To the chief perſons of the church of Epheſus, St. Paul intimates his ſtrong perſuaſion that he was ſoon to endure " bonds " and afflictions;" but in the ſame ſpirit of fortitude, reſignation, and obedience to the divine will, which animated St. Peter, he adds, " None of theſe things move me, neither count " I my life dear unto myſelf, ſo that I might " finiſh my courſe with joy, and the miniſtry " which I have received of the Lord Jeſus, " to teſtify the Goſpel of the grace of " God."

7.—Acts,

7.—Acts, xvii. 31. At Athens he declares that God had "appointed a day, in the which "He will judge the world in righteouſneſs, by "that Man whom he hath ordained."

When to the Romans he intimates the diſtinguiſhed privileges, which divine favour had conferred on the Iſraelites, he mentions it as the completion of all bleſſings, that of them, "as "concerning the fleſh, Chriſt came, who is "over all, God bleſſed for ever." Rom. ix. 5.

8.—Gal. v. 1. To the Galatians he ſays, "Stand faſt therefore in the liberty wherewith "Chriſt hath made us free, and be not entangled "again with the yoke of bondage."

Gal. ii. 16. "Knowing that a man is not "juſtified by the works of the law, but by the "faith of Jeſus Chriſt, even *we* have believed "in Jeſus Chriſt, that we might be juſtified by "the faith of Chriſt, and not by the works of "the law."

Rom. iii. 20—28. To the Romans he pronounces that "by the deeds of the law there "ſhall no fleſh be juſtified."—"All have "ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God; "being juſtified freely by his grace, through "the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus, whom "God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation,

" through faith in his blood, to declare his " righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that " are paſt, through the forbearance of God."

9.—1 Theſſ. iv. 14—18. " If we believe " that Jeſus died and roſe again, even ſo them " alſo which ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with " him."—" Wherefore, comfort one another " with theſe words."

10.—Eph. i. 6, 7. " He hath made us " accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have " redemption through his blood, even the for- " giveneſs of ſins, according to the riches of " His grace."

Col. i. 14. " In whom we have redemption " through His blood, even the forgiveneſs of " ſins."

11.—Eph. ii. 19—21. " Now therefore ye are " no more ſtrangers and foreigners, but fellow- " citizens with the ſaints, and of the houſehold " of God; and are built upon the foundation " of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt " himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone; in " whom all the building fitly framed toge- " ther, groweth unto a holy temple in the " Lord."

12.—Rom. vi. 6. " Our old man is cruci- " fied with him, that the body of ſin might be " deſtroyed,

" deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not " ſerve ſin."

2 Cor. v. 21. " He hath made Him to be " ſin for us, who knew no ſin; that we might " be made the righteouſneſs of God in Him."

Phil. ii. 8. " And being found in faſhion as " a man, He humbled himſelf, and became " obedient unto death, even the death of the " croſs."

Heb. ix. 28. " So Chriſt was once offered " to bear the ſins of many."

13.—Phil. ii. 9—11. " Wherefore God alſo " hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name " which is above every name, that at the name " of Jeſus every knee ſhould bow, of things in " heaven and things in earth, and things under " the earth: and that every tongue ſhould con- " feſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory " of God the Father."

Eph. i. 20—22. " He raiſed Him from the " dead, and ſet Him at his own right-hand in the " heavenly places, far above all principality, " and power, and might, and dominion, and " every name that is named, not only in this " world, but alſo in that which is to come: " and hath put all things under his feet, and

" gave Him to be the Head over all things to
" the Church."

15.—Gal. v. 22. " The fruit of the Spirit
" is love, joy, peace, long-ſuffering, gentleneſs,
" goodneſs, faith."

1 Cor. xii. 3. " No man can ſay that Jeſus
" is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt."

If the diſcourſes and writings of theſe two Apoſtles be now compared, we ſhall find St. Peter concurring with St. Paul, in all *his* opinions and declarations on the leading principles of Chriſtianity. That Chriſt is the Son of God; that He is the Meſſiah; that He died as an atoning ſacrifice for the moral guilt of human nature; that He roſe from the dead; that He is exalted to the higheſt dignity, and endued with Almighty power; that even a Jew could hope to recover the favour of God, *only* by faith in Chriſt, and obedience to Him as his Lord and Saviour, and that therefore the obſervance of ceremonious rites was not to be impoſed on the Gentiles as indiſpenſably requiſite for their admiſſion to the Chriſtian covenant; that faith in Chriſt, and obedience to Him, proceed from the aſſiſtance which the Holy Spirit imparts to us; and that the Reſurrection of our Lord

Lord is a pledge which gives us aſſurance of our own reſurrection: all theſe truths are maintained by St. Peter not leſs explicitly than by St. Paul. Hence then we have reaſon to acquieſce in the opinion of Dr. PALEY, that the ground of diſſenſion between theſe Apoſtles was not any matter ſo eſſential, as "compelling the "Gentiles to be circumciſed," (according to Dr. MACKNIGHT's account, in p. 35 of his "Life of St. Paul,") but merely ſome point of accommodation between the Jewiſh and Gentile converts; ſuch, perhaps, as a ſtricter abſtinence from meats offered to idols, from things ſtrangled, and from blood, than the Gentile converts were yet diſpoſed to adopt.

But from whatever cauſe their diſpute may have ariſen, it ſeems to have terminated in cordial reconciliation. The words of St. Peter, in his 2 Ep. iii. 15. juſtify this ſuppoſition. Thus then, if their diſſenſion was an inſtance of human frailty to be lamented, their placability was an example of Chriſtian forgiveneſs to be imitated.

P. 324. l. 13. *A Pythagorean.*

Σκηνος et Hebræis et Pythagoricis eſt *corpus*. Sic γεωδες σκηνος idem quod φθαρτον σωμα,

Sap. ix. 5. Appellat ſic et Euryſus Libro de Fortunâ, Theagis Libro de Virtutibus, Pythagorici ambo; et Plato Axiocho; et Hebræus Liber Zoar.

ESTIUS & GROTIUS, quoted in POLE's Synopſis on 2 Cor. v. 1.

See the explanation of Σκηνος in PARKHURST's Lexicon.

"Though, in the language of the pulpit, "(*i. e.* Σκηνος) conveys a kind of myſterious "notion, (it) is nothing more than a Pytha- "gorean term for the human body, conſidered "as a caſe or covering for the ſoul."

MARSH's MICHAELIS, ch. iv. ſ. 8. p. 154.

P. 329. l. 9, 10, note. *Other kinds of learning.*

See the Oratio Inauguralis de Vero Theologo of WITSIUS.

Qui verus Theologus, et magnifico iſthoc nomine dignus cluet, eum oportet ſtudiorum ſuorum tyrocinia in inferiori naturæ ſcholâ ponere, et ex conditu Univerſi, ex Providentiæ Divinæ admirandis, ex veteris ac recentioris hiſtoriæ monumentis, ex quarumcunque artium penetralibus, ex variarum linguarum elegantiis, ea congerere, atque in memoriâ veluti ſanctiore ærario

ærario reponere, quæ, mox ad ſuperiorem Acã-demiam promotus, grandiori ædificio quaſi fundamenta ſubſternat. Non fuſtrà Deus viſibiles inviſibilium virtutum ſuarum notas operibus ſuis impreſſit. Non fuſtrà hominem ſagaci donatum mente in auguſtum hoc mundi theatrum introduxit. Non fruſtrà in Univerſi moderamine, rerumque humanarum mutationibus, tam conſtanti inconſtantiâ, tam ſapienti arbitrio, cuncta diſpenſat. Non fruſtrà Naturæ opera ita diſpoſuit, ut in iis typum quendam operum gratiæ et gloriæ, et melioris mundi quaſi rudimenta cernere ſit. Sed voluit, ut ex iis omnibus attentâ conſideratione diſceremus, quis qualiſque ipſe ſit; Æternus, Immenſus, ſummè Potens, ſummè Sapiens, Optimus ſimul et Maximus, ſibi ipſi ad plenam beatitatem ſufficientiſſimus, quum omnibus vitam, et halitum, et omnia det; dignus denique quem colamus, quem imitemur, cui nos dedamus totos, et in cujus amore et fruitione felicitatis noſtræ apicem collocemus. Voluit ut Majeſtatem ſuam in ipſo cordis noſtri meditullio fulgoris ſui radios exerentem, inibi leges dantem, delicta veloci pœnâ vindicantem, benè acta placidiſſimâ animi tranquillitate remunerantem, ſuſpiceremus. Voluit ut probè animadverſo, quàm fluxa, evanida, et et plus quam vitrea ſint, quæ falsò æterna credebantur,

bantur, ad cœleſtia anhelaremus, et ipſum adeò cœli Dominum, qui ſtabilis manens cuncta moveri facit. Neque Dei duntaxat opera Theologus noſter contempletur, ſed et quidquid humana induſtria ad mentem in veritatis inveſtigatione dirigendam, ad linguam, ut commodus mentis interpres ſit, informandam, excogitavit, in comperto habere allaboret. Logicæ, Grammaticæ, Rhetoricæ magiſtros haut perfunctoriè conſulat; illis ut olim Iſraelitæ Gibeonitis utens, qui lignis findendis, aquiſque in uſum Sanctuarii hauriendis, operam navabant. Illi definiendi, dividendi, diſponendi præcepta tradant; hi purè ac tersè, imo elegantèr etiam et flexanimè dicendi artem doceant, ut ſic utrique Dei tabernaculo inſervientibus aptiſſimè famulentur. Præcepta virtutum ex philoſophorum placitis, exempla ex hiſtoriarum monumentis congerat, ut vel ad ulteriora tendenti calcar ſint, vel, ſi id minus præſtant, turpiſſimum languorem et inertiam exprobrare valeant. Varias linguas ſedulò addiſcat, eas ante omnia, quibus cœleſtia oracula ſua edere dignatus eſt Deus. Quicquid in humanis artibus ſani et ſobrii, quicquid in philoſophiâ veri et ſolidi, quicquid in politioris literaturæ apparatu elegantis et decori eſt, id omne a Patre luminum, omnis rationis, veritatis, elegantiæ, inexhauſto fonte promanat: quod idcirco undique

undique collectum ipsi rursus sacrum fieri debet. Minuta licet et terrena hæcce videantur, attamen minuta et terrena ista acus sunt, quibus aurea veritatum cœlestium fila introducamus, et animis nostris firmiter insuamus: specula sunt, quorum adminiculo subtilissimæ rerum supernaturalium imagines oculis nostris renovatis clariùs percipiantur. Rudimenta hæc futuri Theologi sint, quibus superciliosè spretis vix est ut cum optato fructu in superioribus versetur, et nomini ac officio suo satisfaciat.

Vol. ii. Miscellan. Sacr. 853.

See on the same subject, and for some critical remarks, ERASMUS's "Ecclesiastæ," lib. ii. p. 851, *&c.* Vol. v. ed. fol. 1704.

P. 404. l. 10. *In proportion to our improvements*, &c.

It is, I think, generally supposed that there will be a great variety of punishments. To be deprived of some good which by a proper conduct might have been secured and obtained, if it be attended with dissatisfaction or regret, is certainly a punishment: and if it always lasts, an eternal punishment. He who is in this condition has lost his rank, and is placed far beneath

many of thoſe who were once his equals, without a poſſibility of retrieving the loſs.

No leſs various may be the recompences. The inexhauſtible Fountain of Good has *more than one bleſſing*. He has gifts of a lower ſort for thoſe who are not worthy *to ſit down on the right hand* or *on the left hand* of his Son. *In his houſe are many manſions;* in his wide-extended kingdom there may be habitations remote, perhaps, from his throne, yet not beyond his favourable influences, ſituated within the realms of light, and appointed for beings of moderate improvements, but of good inclinations; who ſhall be permitted to adore him at a diſtance.

Dr. JORTIN's Diſcourſes on the Chriſtian Religion. Diſc. 7. p. 273. ed. 1768.

P. 429. l. 2. *In the predictions concerning the fall of the Temple*, &c.

" It were a bold aſſertion, that by accident " alone was fulfilled a prediction thus circum- " ſtantially delivered, and thus preciſe in limit- " ing the period of its accompliſhment. ' Verily " I ſay unto you, this generation ſhall not paſs " till all theſe things be fulfilled.' Beſides, the " knowledge of it had been ſo induſtriouſly " propagated by the Apoſtles among the ſeveral " commu-

" communities, that the truth of this prediction " ſeemed in a great meaſure to determine the " truth of the religion: they would therefore " hardly have ventured to expoſe both them- " ſelves and their ſect to ſo dangerous a " trial, had no ſuch prophecy been given by " Chriſt.

" Let it be objected, that human ſagacity " were ſufficient to foreſee that the misfortunes " which had long threatened muſt at laſt fall " upon the Jews, ſince the ſtorm had been " gathering at a diſtance before it burſt forth " with violence. But preciſely to determine " not only that ſeries of events recorded by " St. Matthew, but even the period of its ac- " compliſhment, is ſurely beyond the reach of " human foreſight. We may go ſtill farther, " and deny that human penetration could have " foreſeen, in that age, even the event itſelf; " of which Joſephus in his hiſtory of the Jewiſh " war affords the ſtrongeſt proof. For although " there exiſted, ſo early as the year in which " Chriſt was crucified, various cauſes which " afterwards contributed to the ſtorm, that " broke over Jeruſalem, yet from theſe cauſes " neither the deſtruction of the city nor even " the Jewiſh war would have followed, had not " a number of unexpected and at that time im-

" probable

" probable circumſtances ariſen, of which no
" one by human means, during the life of
" Chriſt, or even the lives of St. Peter and St.
" Paul, could have had the ſmalleſt concep-
" tion."

Introduction to the New Teſtament by JOHN DAVID MICHAELIS, tranſlated by HERBERT MARSH. Chap. ii. § 1. p. 10. ed. 1793.

P. 466. l. 5. *Miracles wrought*, &c.

To conſider miracles as proofs of divine miſſion is according to the general apprehenſion of mankind. Hence falſe Chriſts and falſe Prophets *promiſed* and *pretended* to work miracles, as our LORD had predicted in St. Matthew, xxiv. 24. " There ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts and falſe
" Prophets, and they ſhall *ſhew* great ſigns and
" wonders." *They ſhall ſhew*, i. e. they ſhall *profeſs* to ſhew, according to Dr. Lardner on this paſſage: " Our LORD does not intend to
" ſay that any of thoſe falſe prophets would
" exhibit or perform great wonders. The ori-
" ginal word is δωσουσι, *they will give:* the ſame
" word that is in the Septuagint verſion of
" Deut. xiii. 1. 'If there ariſe among you a
" prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and he
" giveth

" giveth thee a ſign or a wonder, και δῳ σοι
" σημειον η τερας,' that is, ſhall *propoſe* or *promiſe*
" ſome ſign or wonder; as the ſequel ſhews."

Dr. LARDNER's Works. vol. vii. p. 58. ed. 1788.

This explanation is adopted in PARKHURST's " Lexicon to the New Teſtament," under the word διδωμι.

Archbiſhop NEWCOME gives a ſimilar expoſition; and to it ſubjoins another alſo, intimating that the falſe Chriſts would indeed in *appearance* work ſigns and wonders; but it would be in *appearance* only, and not in reality.

Obſervations, &c. p. 204,5. ed. 1795.

P. 471. l. ult. *By the ties of gratitude*, &c.

" Being through its means (*i. e.* through Re-
" velation) once acquainted with thoſe new rela-
" tions, in which God's mercy to fallen man
" hath placed us, and with the new obligations
" to which they ſubject us, it is no leſs crimi-
" nal to diſregard this part of religion than the
" other."

Archbiſhop SECKER's Sermons, vol. vii. p. 154.

THE END.